Jno. A. Reff.

Salt Lake City,

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Jno. A. Reff.

THE

COMMENTARY

OF

DR. ZACHARIAS URSINUS,

ON THE

HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL LATIN,
BY THE REV. G. W. WILLIARD, D. D.

THIRD AMERICAN EDITION

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THE

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

In presenting the English Reader with a translation of the Theological Lectures of Dr. Ursinus, upon the Heidelberg Catechism, it is presumed no apology is necessary, at least as far as the German Reformed Church is concerned. Considering the character of Ursinus, his acknowledged ability, and relations to the whole Reformed interest it is a matter of great surprise, that some one has not long since been found to undertake the arduous and difficult task which we have very imperfectly accomplished. Many other works greatly inferior to this, have been favored with translations, whilst no pains have been spared to give them an extensive circulation, and yet no attempt has been made of late years to place these lectures in the hands of the English reader. And what is stranger still, is the fact that the name of Ursinus himself, than whom no one is more worthy of grateful and honorable recollection, is in a great measure unknown. We have, therefore, been led to undertake the difficult task of translating these lectures, being fully convinced that we shall in so doing contribute no little to the dissemination of sound theological views, and at the same time bring to favorable notice one whose memory deserves to be held in grateful recollection. The writings of Ursinus are well deserving of a place in every minister's library, by the side of the works of Luther, Melancthon, Zuingle, Calvin, and others of blessed memory, and will not suffer in the least by a comparison with them.

The old English translation by Parry, made over two hundred years ago, is not only antiquated and unsuited to the taste of the modern English reader, but is also out of print, and not to be had except by the rarest chance. Few copies are to be found at the present day. The copy now in our possession, which we constantly consulted in making the present translation, was printed in the year 1645, and seems to have been gotten up with much care and expense. We had seen notices of the work, and had for several years made constant efforts to secure it, but without success, until about two years ago an esteemed

friend placed in our hands a number of foreign catalogues in which we saw three copies of the works of Ursinus, one Latin and two English, advertised. We immediately gave orders to have them imported, and in this way came into possession of the copies we now have. The Latin copy from which we have made the present translation, was published in Geneva in the year 1616, and is without doubt a copy of the best and most complete edition made by Dr. David Pareus, the intimate friend and disciple of Ursinus. It is in every respect greatly superior to another Latin copy, the use of which we secured from the Rev. Dr. Hendron of the Presbyterian church, after having made very considerable progress in the work of translation. This last copy was published in the year 1585, and is probably a copy of one of the earliest editions of the works of Ursinus, of which notice is taken in the excellent "Introduction" from the pen of Dr. Nevin, which will be read with much interest, and throw much light upon the life and character of the author of these Lectures.

Great pains have been taken with the translation so as to render it as complete as possible. In every instance we have been careful to give the exact sense of the author, so that the translation is as literal as it could well be, without being slavishly bound to the text, the style of which we found in a number of instances to be of such a peculiar character as to require some liberty on the part of the Translator. Yet with all the care that has been taken, a number of errors will no doubt make their appearance, in reference to which we ask the indulgence of the reader. The work has been gotten out under many disadvantages, the translation having been made, whilst attending to our regular pastoral duties in the congregation which we have been called to serve in this city.

The old English translation contains considerable matter which is not to be found in either of the Latin copies now in our possession. We have in several instances taken the liberty of inserting short extracts, changing the style, and construction of many of the sentences so as to adapt it to the taste of the modern reader. Whenever this is done it is marked by the word "addenda."

It is not deemed necessary to say any thing in reference to the merits of these lectures. All who have any acquaintance with the character of Ursinus, and of the important position which he occupied in the church in the sixteenth century—the time of the glorious Reformation—can have but one opinion respecting their merits. We may add, however, that a number of important testimonies might readily be furnished; but we prefer rather to let the Book speak for itself, having

the assurance that none can peruse its pages with proper care, without being instructed and profited.

These lectures present a complete exposition of all the leading doctrines of the Christian religion in a most concise and simple form, adapted not only to those who are accustomed to read and think, but also to a very great extent to the common reader. Nor is this done in an outward, mechanical manner, but it introduces us at once into the inmost sanctuary of religion, which all are made to feel is not a mere form or notion, or doctrine, but life and power, springing from Christ, "the Way, the Truth and the Life."

To the German Reformed Church these lectures should possess much interest. No work could well be published at this time, which should be in greater demand. It may indeed, be said to meet a want which has been extensively felt in our church, not only by the ministry, but also by the laity. Many persons have often asked for some work which would give a complete and faithful exposition of the doctrines contained in our excellent summary of faith—the Heidelberg Catechism. Such a work has been greatly needed for years past, and cannot fail to accomplish a number of important and desirable ends. And as Ursinus was the chief compiler of this symbol, he must always be regarded as the most authoritative expounder of the doctrines which it contains. Great exertions should, therefore, be made to have his Commentary placed in every family belonging to our Reformed Zion.

But whilst these Lectures possess a peculiar interest to the German Reformed Church, it should not for a moment be supposed that they have merely a denominational interest, which may be said to be true of many works. They are like the excellent symbol of which they profess to give a complete and faithful exposition, truly catholic and general. Nor could the book well be otherwise if true to itself. A faithful exposition of the Apostles' creed, the Decalogue and Lord's Prayer, which enter so largely into the Heidelberg Catechism, cannot fail to be of general interest to all those who love and pray for the prosperity and coming of Christ's kingdom. May we not therefore, fondly anticipate a rapid and extensive circulation of the book in the different branches of the Christian Church.

We do not of course intend to be understood as giving an unqualified approval of every view and sentiment contained in these lectures. It is sufficient to say that they are, as a whole, truly orthodox, and well adapted to promote the cause of truth and godliness. They are characterized throughout by earnestness and independence of thought. The

writer every where speaks as one who feels the force and importance of the views which he presents. It should also be borne in mind that the value of a book does not consist in its agreement and harmony with the views and opinions generally received and entertained, which may be said to be true of many works which after all do not possess any great value, containing nothing more than a repetition of what has been often said in a more impressive manner. Such, however, is not the chief recommendation of the book which we here present to the Christian public: for whilst it may be said to be in harmony with the doctrines which have been held by the church from the very beginning, it is at the same time earnest, deep, and independent, and well calculated at every point to awaken thought and enquiry.

Conscious of having labored hard and diligently to give a good and faithful translation of these lectures, we now commit them to the public, not without much diffidence, with all the imperfections attending the present translation, with the hope and prayer that they may accomplish the objects we have had in view, and that the reputation of the lectures themselves may be made to suffer no injury from the form in which they now appear.

GEO. W. WILLIARD.

Columbus, Ohio, Sept. 1851.

INTRODUCTION.

ZACHARIAS URSINUS.

Among the reformers of the second generation, the race of distinguished men, who, though themselves the children of the reformation, were yet in a certain sense joined with the proper original Apostles of that great work, in carrying it out to its final settlement and conclusion, no one can be named who is more worthy of honorable recollection, than the learned and amiable author of the far-famed Heidelberg Catechism. In some respects, indeed, the authorship of this symbol must be referred, we know, to different hands. But in its main plan, and reigning spirit, it is the genial product, plainly, of a single mind, and to the end of time, accordingly, it will be known and revered as a monument, sacred to the memory of *Zacharias Ursinus*.

In one view we may say of the Catechism, that it forms the best history, and clearest picture of the man himself; for the materials of his biography, outwardly considered, are comparatively scanty, and of no very striking interest. He had neither taste nor talent for the field of outward adventure and exploit. His whole nature shrank rather from the arena of public life. In its noise and tumult, he took, comparatively speaking, but little part. The world in which he moved and acted mainly, was that of the spirit; and here, his proper home, was the sphere of religion. To understand his history and character, we need not so much to be familiar with the events of his life outwardly taken, as to know the principles and facts which go to make up its constitution in an inward view; and of this, we can have no more true or honorable representation, perhaps, than the likeness that is still preserved of him in his own Catechism. Here, most emphatically may it be said, that "he being dead, yet speaketh."

Ursinus was a native of Bresslau, the capitol of Silesia. He was born on the 18th of July, in the year 1534, of respectable parents, whose circumstances, however, in a worldly view, appear to have been of the most common and moderate order. The proper family name was *Beer*, (Bear) which, according to the fashion of the learned world in that period, was exchanged subsequently, in his case, for the more sonorous corresponding Latin title, *Ursinus*. He discovered at a very early period, a more than usual talent and disposition for acquiring knowledge, and was sent in his sixteenth year accordingly, to Wittemberg, for the prosecution of his studies in the celebrated University of that place, then under the auspices mainly, of the amiable and excellent Melancthon. Here he was supported, in

part it seems, for a time at least, by foreign assistance, and particularly by an allowance from the Senate of his native city; while he was enabled soon to help himself also, in part, by a certain amount of service in teaching.

He remained in connection with this University, altogether, seven years, though not without some interruption. The breaking out of the plague in Wittemberg, was the occasion of his spending a winter, in company with Melancthon, at Torgaw; and for some other reason, the threatening aspect, perhaps, of the political heavens, he left the institution again in 1552, and returned with honorable testimonials to the place of his birth. The year after, however, we find him back once more in his beloved Wittemberg, where his studies were continued now with great diligence and success, on to the year 1557.

During this period, his proficiency in the arts and sciences, was such as to win for him general approbation and favor. He is represented as excelling particularly in classical literature, philosophy and theology. He was considered besides, quite a master of poetry; and composed himself various productions in Latin and Greek verse, which were much admired. Along with all this intellectual culture too, went hand in hand a corresponding culture of the inner spiritual man, which formed the crowning grace of his education, and added new value to every gift besides. Naturally gentle, modest, amiable and sincere, these qualities were refined and improved still farther, by the power of religion, which was with him a matter of living sense and inward heart-felt experience, the deepest and most comprehensive habit of the soul. It speaks with special significance to his praise, that Melancthon, the ornament of the University, conceived a very high regard for his abilities and moral qualities, and continued on terms of intimate personal friendship with him to the end of his own life. The high opinion in which he held his pupil, is shown strikingly by the encyclical letter of recommendation which he placed in his hands, when he proposed, at the close of his course in Wittemberg, to go abroad for a time, on a tour of observation and acquaintance in other parts of the learned world as it then stood.

This sort of travel, which served to bring the young apprentice of letters into personal contact with foreign scholars, was considered in that age necessary in some sense to a finished theological training; and it shows the importance attached to it, as well as the honorable relation in which he stood to his native place, that the Senate of Bresslau saw proper, in the case of Ursinus, to provide for the expenses of his journey out of the public funds. It was on the ground of this municipal generosity mainly, that he felt himself bound subsequently, to devote his first professional labors to the service of this city.

Melancthon deseribes him, in his circular, as a young man of respectable extraction, endowed of God with a gift for poetry, of upright and gentle manners, deserving the love and praise of all good men. "He has lived in our Academy," he goes on to say, "about seven years, and has endeared himself to everybody of right feeling among us, by his sound erudition, and his earnest piety towards

God." Then follows a notice of his pilgrimage, undertaken to make himself acquainted with the wise and good in other lands; who are affectionately asked, accordingly, to receive him in a spirit answerable to his learning and modesty.

Provided with this high recommendation, he accompanied Melancthon first to the memorable conference, held in 1557, at Worms, from which place he proceeded afterwards to Heidelberg, Strasburg, Basel, Lausanne and Geneva. This brought him into acquaintance with the leaders generally of the Reformed Church; who seem to have been gained, in a short time, to as favorable a judgment of his character, as that just quoted from Melancthon himself. From Switzerland he passed, by Lyons and Orleans, to the city of Paris, where he spent some time perfecting himself in French and Hebrew. After this, we find him again in Switzerland, making himself at home, especially in Zurich, where he enjoyed the intimate confidence and friendship of Bullinger, Peter Martyr, Gessner and other distinguished men, then belonging to that place.

On his return to Wittemberg, he received a call (Sept., 1558) from the authorities of Bresslau, to take charge of its principal school, the Elizabethan Gymnasium.

Here his services gave great satisfaction. But it was not long before a difficulty rose, which brought the first settlement to an abrupt termination. This was nothing less than a charge against him of unsound faith in regard to the sacraments. It was a time when Lutheran Germany was passing into a general hurricane of excitement, under the progress of the second great sacramental war, which resulted in its rupture, finally, into two confessions. Ursinus was found to hold the Calvinistic view of Christ's presence in the Lord's supper, as distinguished from the high Lutheran doctrine of such men as Westphal and Tilemann Hesshuss. An alarm was raised accordingly, by the clergy of the place, on the subject of his orthodoxy. As in the case of the celebrated minister Hardenberg, of Bremen, so here one great ground of suspicion, was Melancthon's friendship and favor. It seemed to be taken for granted, by the zealots for high Lutheranism, that no one could be in close intimacy with Melancthon, who was not at bottom a Crypto—Calvinist. Ursinus published a small tract in his own justification, setting forth in clear and compact summary, his views of the sacramental presence. This was his first theological production. It exhibited what might be regarded as the Melancthonian doctrine of the eucharist, and was in fact approved and commended by Melancthon himself in terms of the highest praise. It did not serve, however, to silence the spirit of persecution in Bresslau. The author was still held up to reproach as a *sacramentarian*. In these circumstances, he made up his mind in a short time to withdraw. The magistracy would gladly have retained him, in spite of the industrious clamor of his enemies. But he had a strong constitutional aversion to all strife and commotion; and he retired accordingly, with an honorable dismission, a voluntary martyr to the holy cause of peace, to seek a more quiet sphere of action in some different quarter.

When asked by a friend at this time, whither he would now go, his reply was in keeping with the union of gentleness and firmness, that entered so largely into his character. "I am well content to quit my country," he said, "when it will not tolerate the confession of truth which I cannot with a good conscience renounce. Were my excellent preceptor, Philip, still alive, I would betake myself to no one else than him. As he is dead, however, my mind is made up to turn to the Zurichers, who are in no great credit here, indeed, but whose fame stands so high with other churches, that it cannot be obscured by our preachers. They are pious, learned, great men, in whose society I am disposed, henceforth, to spend my life As regards the rest, God will provide."

He reached Zurich on the 3d of October, 1560, and devoted the following winter here, to the active prosecution of his studies; under the guidance, more particularly, as it would seem, of the distinguished theologian, Peter Martyr. His relations to this learned and excellent man were in some respects of the same kind, with those in which he had stood previously with Melancthon. Among all the Swiss reformers, there was no one to whom he attached himself so closely, or who exerted over him the same influence, as this may be traced still in his subsequent writings. So far as the Reformed complexion is found to prevail directly in Ursinus, the pupil of Melancthon, the modification is to be referred mainly to Peter Martyr.

In the meantime God was preparing a proper theatre for his activity in the Church of the Palatinate, for which, also, his whole previous history and training might seem to have been designed and ordered, in the way of special Providence.

This interesting country, had hardly become well settled on the side of the Reformation, before it was thrown into violent commotion, in common with other parts of Germany, by the breaking out of the second sacramental war, to which we have already referred, as leading to the rupture of the two confessions. Out of this rupture, and in the midst of these storms of fierce theological debate, grew the *German Reformed Church*, over against the cause of high Lutheranism, as this came to its natural completion finally in the Form of Concord.

The great point at issue in the controversy, as it now stood, was the *mode* simply of Christ's mystical presence in the holy eucharist. The fact of a real communication with his true mediatorial life, the substance of his body and blood, was acknowledged in general terms on both sides. The rigid Lutheran party, however, were not satisfied with this. They insisted on a nearer definition of the manner in which the mystery must be regarded as having place; and contended in particular for the formula, "*In, with and under*," as indispensable to a complete expression of the Saviour's sacramental presence. He must be so comprehended in the elements, as to be received along with them by the *mouth*, on the part of all communicants, whether believers or unbelievers. It was for refusing to admit these extreme requisitions only, that the other party was branded with the epithet "sacramentarian," and held up to malediction in every direction as the pest of

society. The heresy of which it was judged to be guilty, stood simply in this, that the presence of Christ was held to be, after the theory of Calvin, not "in, with and under" the bread, but only *with* it; not for the mouth, but only for *faith;* not in the flesh, but only by the *Spirit*, as the medium of a higher mode of existence; not for unbelievers, therefore, but only for *believers*. This was the nature of the question, that now kindled all Germany into conflagration. It respected altogether the mode or manner of Christ's substantial presence in the Lord's supper, not the awful fact of the mystery itself as always owned by the Christian Church.

The controversy soon reached the Palatinate. The city of Heidelberg especially, and its University, were thrown by it into complete confusion. It was in the midst of this tempestuous agitation, that the wise and excellent Prince Frederick the Third, surnamed the Pious, succeeded to the electorate. Under his auspices, as is generally known, the Reformed or Calvinistic tendency became established in the Palatinate. In the first place, the public quiet was restored by the dismission of the two factious spirits, Hesshuss and Klebiz, who, as leaders on different sides, made the pulpit ring with intemperate strife, and were not to be silenced in any more gentle way. It was then felt necessary, in the next place, to have the subject of this controversy brought to some such settlement, if possible, as might preserve the peace of the country in time to come. The Elector conceived the design, accordingly, of establishing a rule of faith for his dominions, which might serve as a common measure to compose and regulate the existing distraction. The Augsburg Confession, plainly, was not enough for this object; for the point to be settled was mainly, in what sense that Confession was to be taken on the question here in debate. Melancthon was consulted in the case, and one of the last acts he performed, is found in the celebrated *Response*, by which he gave his sanction to the general course proposed by the Elector Frederick; although, of course, he could not be supposed to have in view the end to which the movement came finally, as a formal transition to the Reformed Church. Such, however, was in a little time the result. There was no violent revolution in this change. The reigning spirit of the University, and of the land, was already more Reformed than Lutheran. Some alterations were made in the forms of worship. In all new appointments, preference was given to Calvinistic divines, and several were called from abroad to occupy places of trust and power. Finally, the whole work may be said to have become complete by the formation of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Among the new appointments of which we have just spoken, no name deserves to be regarded as more important or conspicuous, than that of Zacharias Ursinus. The direct occasion of his call, appears to have been an invitation of the same kind addressed in the first place to his friend, Peter Martyr, which this last saw proper to decline on account of his advanced age, while he used his influence afterwards, to secure the situation for Ursinus. In this way he was brought to Heidelberg, A. D. 1561, where he became honorably settled as principal of the institution known as the "Collegium Sapientiæ," in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

The year following, he was promoted to the degree of Doctor of Divinity, which imposed on him the duty of delivering theological lectures in the University.

It soon became plain, that he was formed to be the ruling spirit of the new movement, which had commenced in the Church of the Palatinate. He gained completely the confidence of the Elector; his learning and piety, and excellent judgment, secured for him the general respect of his colleagues; and from all sides, the eyes of men were turned to him more and more, as the best representative and expounder of the cause in whose service he stood, and to whose defence he had cheerfully consecrated his life. In this way, with all the natural quietness of his character, we find him gradually placed in the very heart and centre of the great ecclesiastical struggle, in which he was called to take part. His settlement at Heidelberg, continued till the death of his patron, Frederick, in 1576, a period of fifteen years. During this time, his labors were kept up with the most untiring constancy and diligence; the occasion and demand for them, being still in proportion to their generally acknowledged faithfulness and worth. His regular official services were extensive and heavy; the more especially so, as he could never consent to be loose or superficial in his preparations, but felt himself bound always to bestow on his lectures the most thorough and conscientious care. But in addition to all this, he was called upon continually, to conduct a large amount of other business, growing out of the public history of the times, and often of the most arduous and responsible kind. On every emergency, in which it became necessary to vindicate or support the Reformed faith, as it stood in the Palatinate, whether this was to be done in the name of the theological faculty of Heidelberg, or by the authority of the Elector, Ursinus was still looked to as the leading counsellor and spokesman of the transaction. With the high position, moreover, which the Church of the Palatinate very soon won, among the Churches generally of the same confession, associated as its distinctive genius and spirit were from the beginning with his name, the representative character now noticed took from year to year a still wider range, extending in time, we might almost say, like that of Calvin himself, to the entire Reformed communion. As the earlier chiefs of this faith were removed by death, there was no one who, by his personal connections, his extensive knowledge, his clear insight into the interior nature of the points in debate, and the admirable qualities of his spirit, could be said to be better fitted to represent the communion in any such general way; and there was no one probably, to whom in truth the confidence of all was so much disposed to turn, as the main prop and pillar, theologically, of the whole Reformed cause.

Among the public ecclesiastical services to which we have just referred, the first place belongs, of course, to the formation of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, which is to be regarded as in some sense, the foundation of his subsequent labors.

To this task he was appointed in 1562, by the Elector Frederick, in association with the distinguished theological professor and court-preacher, Caspar Olevianus. Each of them drew up separately, in the first place, his own scheme or sketch of

what was supposed to be required, Olevianus in a popular tract on the Covenant of Grace, and Ursinus in a two-fold Catechism, the larger for older persons, and a smaller one for children. Out of these preliminary works was formed, in the first place, the Catechism as it now stands. It has been generally assumed from the first, that the principal agency in its production, is to be ascribed to Ursinus; and to be fully convinced of the correctness of this view, it is only necessary to compare the work itself with his larger and smaller Catechisms, previously composed, as well as with his writings upon it in the way of commentary and defence afterwards. Whatever use may have been made of foreign suggestion or help, it is sufficiently plain from the interior structure of the formulary itself, that it is no mechanical compilation, but the living product of a single mind; there is an inward unity, harmony, freshness and vitality, pervading it throughout, which show it to be, in this respect, a genuine work of art, the inspiration, in a certain sense, of one representing the life of many. And it is no less plain, we may say, that the one mind in which it has thus been moulded and cast, is that emphatically of Ursinus and of no one besides. The Catechism breathes his spirit, reflects his image, and speakes to us in the very tones of his voice, from the first page to the last.

It is well known, what widely extended favor this little work soon found in all parts of the Reformed Church. In every direction, it was welcomed as the best popular summary of religious doctrine, that had yet appeared on the side of this confession. Distinguished divines in other lands, united in bearing testimony to its merits. It was considered the glory of the Palatinate, to have presented it to the world. Some went so far, as to make it the fruit of a special and extraordinary influence of God's Spirit, approaching even to inspiration. It rose rapidly into the character of a general symbol, answerable in such view to what Luther's Catechism had already become as a popular standard for the other confession. Far and wide, it became the basis on which systems of religious instruction were formed, by the most excellent and learned divines. In the course of time, commentaries, paraphrases, and courses of sermons, were written upon it almost without number. Few works have passed into as many different versions. It was translated into Hebrew, ancient and modern Greek, Latin, Low Dutch, Spanish, French, English, Italian, Bohemian, Polish, Hungarian, Arabic and Malay. In all this, we have at once an argument of its great worth. It must have been admirably adapted, to meet the wants of the Church at large, as well as admirably true to the inmost sense of its general life, to come in this way so easily and so soon to such wide reputation and credit. Originally a provincial interest merely, it yet grew rapidly into the character of a general or universal symbol; while other older Catechisms and Confessions of Faith, had force, at best, only for the particular countries that gave them birth. It was owned with applause, in Switzerland, France, England, Scotland and Holland, as well as by all who were favorably disposed towards the Reformed faith, in Germany itself. Nor was this praise

transient; an ephemeral burst of applause, succeeded again by general indifference and neglect. On the contrary, the authority of the symbol grew with its age. It became for the Reformed body, as we have just seen, the counterpart in full of the similar text book held by the Lutheran body from the hand of Luther himself. In this character, we find it quoted and appealed to on all sides, by both friends and foes. Such vast popularity, we say, of itself, implies vast merit. We may allow, indeed, that the terms in which some of the old divines have spoken of its excellence, are carried beyond due measure. But this general testimony of the whole Reformed Church in its favor, must ever be of force, to show that they had good reason to speak here with a certain amount of enthusiasm.

The fact of its wide spread and long continued popularity, is important, also, in another view; it goes to show that the formulary was the product, truly and fully, of the religious life of the Reformed Church, in the full bloom of its historical development, as this was reached at the time when the work made its appearance. No creed or confession can be of genuine force, that has not this inwardly organic connection with the life it represents. This must go before the symbol, creating it for its own use. The creed so produced, may come to its utterance, indeed, in the first place, through the medium of a single mind; but the single mind, in such case, must ever be the organ and bearer of the general life in whose name it speaks; otherwise it will not be heard nor felt. Here is the proper criterion of any true Church confession, whether it be in the character of a liturgy, catechism or hymn-book. It must be the life of the Church itself, embodied through some proper organ, in such form of speech, as is at once recognized and responded to by the Church at large, as its own word. This relation between word and life, is happily exhibited in the case now under consideration. Though in one sense a private work, the formulary before us, was by no means the product of simply individual reflection, on the part either of one or of several. Ursinus, in the preparation of it, was the organ of a religious life, far more general and comprehensive than his own. It is the utterance of the Reformed faith, as this stood at the time, and found expression for itself through his person. The evidence of this, we have in the free, full response with which it was met, on the part of the Church, not only in the Palatinate, but also in other lands. It was, as though the entire Reformed Church heard, and joyfully recognized, her own voice in the Heidelberg Catechism. No product of mere private judgment or private will, *could* have come thus into such universal favor.

The great merit which may be fairly inferred from this great reputation, is amply verified, when we come to consider the actual character of the work itself. The more it is carefully studied and examined, the more is it likely to be admired. Among all Protestant symbols, whether of earlier or later date, we hold it to be decidedly the best. It is pervaded throughout, by a thoroughly scientific spirit, far beyond what is common in formularies of this sort. But its science is always earnestly and solemnly practical. It is doctrine apprehended and represented

continually in the form of life. The construction of the whole, is uncommonly simple, beautiful and clear, while the freshness of a sacred religious feeling, breathes through its entire execution. It is for the heart, full as much as for the head. The pathos of a deep toned piety, flows like an under current, through all its teaching, from beginning to end. This serves to impart a peculiar character of dignity and force, to its very style, which at times, with all its simplicity, becomes truly eloquent, and moves with a sort of priestly solemnity, which all are constrained to reverence and respect. Among its characteristic perfections, deserves to be noted particularly, its *catholic* spirit, and the rich *mystical* element, that is found to enter so largely into its composition. No other Reformed symbolical book can compare with it in these respects.

Its catholicity appears in its sympathy with the religious life of the old Catholic Church, in its care to avoid the thorny dialectic subtleties of Calvinism, in the preference it shows for the positive in religion as opposed to the merely negative and controversial, and in the broad and free character generally, which marks the tone of its instructions. Considering the temper of the times, and the relations out of which it grew, it is remarkably free from polemical and party prejudices. A fine illustration of the catholic, historical feeling now noticed, is found in the fact, that so large a part of the work is based directly upon the Apostle's Creed. It not only makes use of this as a text, but enters with evidently hearty interest and affection also, into its general spirit, with the sound, and most certainly right feeling, that no Protestant doctrine can ever be held in a safe form, which is not so held as to be in truth a living branch from the trunk of this primitive symbol in the consciousness of faith. We have to regret indeed always, the turn given (Q, 44) to the clause in the fourth article, *He descended into hell;* where the authority of Calvin is followed, in giving to the words a signification which is good in its own nature, but at the same time notoriously at war with the historical sense of the clause itself. A great deal of offence too, as is generally known, has been taken with the unfortunate declaration, by which the Roman mass is denounced, at the close of the 80th Question, as being " nothing else than a denial of the one sacrifice and sufferings of Jesus Christ, and an accursed idolatry." But it should never be forgotten, that this harsh anathema, so foreign from the spirit of Melancthon and Ursinus, and from the reigning tone also of the Heidelberg Catechism, forms no part of the original work as published under the hand of Ursinus himself. It is wanting in the first two editions; and was afterwards foisted in, only by the authority of the Elector Frederick, in the way of angry retort and counter-blast, we are told, for certain severe declarations the other way, which had been passed a short time before by the Council of Trent.

The mystical element of the Catechism, is closely connected with the catholic spirit, of which we have just spoken. It is that quality in religion, by which it goes beyond all simply logical or intellectual apprehension, and addresses itself directly to the soul, as something to be felt and believed even where it is too deep to

be explained. The Bible abounds with such mysticism. It prevails, especially, in every page of the Apostle John. We find it largely in Luther. It has been often said, that the Reformed faith, as distinguished from the Catholic and the Lutheran, is unfriendly to this element, that it moves supremely in the sphere of the understanding, and so is ever prone to run into rationalism; and it must be confessed, that there is some show of reason for the serious charge. Zwingle's great fault, as well as his chief strength, lay in the clear intellectuality of his nature. Calvin had a deeper sense of the mystical, but at the same time a still vaster power of logic also, which made it very difficult for such sense to come steadily to its proper rights. His theory of the decrees, for instance, does violence continually to his theory of the sacraments. It is only in its last and best form, as we find this brought out in the German Palatinate, that the Reformed system can be said fairly to have surmounted the force of the objection now noticed. The Heidelberg Catechism has regard throughout, to the lawful claims of the understanding; its author was thoroughly versed in all the dialectic subtleties of the age, and an uncommonly fine logic, in truth, distinguishes its whole composition. But along with this runs, at the same time, a continual appeal to the interior sense of the soul, a sort of solemn undertone, sounding from the depths of the invisible world, which only an unction from the Holy One, can enable any fully to hear and understand. The words are often felt in this way, to mean much more than they logically express. The Catechism is no cold workmanship merely of the rationalizing intellect. It is full of feeling and faith. The joyousness of a fresh, simple, childlike trust, appears beautifully and touchingly interwoven with all its divinity. A rich vein of mysticism runs every where through its doctrinal statements. A strain of heavenly music seems to flow around us at all times, while we listen to its voice. It is moderate, gentle, soft, in one word, *Melancthonian*, in its whole cadence; the fit echo and image thus, we may fairly suppose, of the quiet, though profoundly earnest soul of Ursinus himself.

It carries the palm, very decidedly, in our view, as we have before said, over all other Protestant symbols, whether formed before it or since.

But notwithstanding all that has now been said, the Catechism was received far and wide in Germany itself, at the time of its appearance, as a loud declaration of war; and became at once the signal for an angry, violent onset, in the way of contradiction and reproach, from all parts of the Lutheran Church. The high toned party which was now filling the whole empire with its alarm of heresy, could not be expected of course to tolerate patiently any religious formulary, that might be felt to fall short at all of its own vigorous measures of orthodoxy. From this quarter, accordingly, the Catechism was assaulted, more fiercely than even from the Church of Rome itself. Its very moderation, indeed, seemed to magnify the front of its offence. Had there been more of the lion or tiger in its mien, and less of the lamb, its presence might have proved possibly less irritating to the polemical humor of the times. As it was, there was felt to be provocation in its very

meekness. Its outward carriage was held to be deceitful and treacherous; and its heresy was counted all the worse, for being hard to find, and shy of coming to the light. The winds of strife were let loose upon it accordingly, from all points of the compass.

Not only the unity and quiet of the German Church, but the peace also of the German empire, seemed in the eyes of the high Lutheran party, to be brought into jeopardy, by the new Confession. It was held to be not only heresy in religion, but treason also in politics. Both the Elector and his theologians found their faith severely tried, by the general outcry which was raised at their expense. But they were men of faith, and they stood the trial nobly and well.

The attack was opened by Tilemann Hesshuss and the celebrated Flaccius Illyricus, each of whom came out with an angry publication against the Calvinistic Catechism, as they called it, full of the most intolerant invective and abuse, and grossly misrepresenting at different points, the religious change which had taken place in the Palatinate. Among other calumnies, the new faith was charged with turning the Lord's Supper into a profane meal, with undervaluing the necessity of infant baptism, with iconomachy, and with an attempt to alter the decalogue in departing from the old order of its precepts. Other blasts of warning and alarm were soon heard, in much the same tone, from different quarters. Wirtemberg in particular, issued a solemn censure, drawn up by her two best divines, in which eighteen questions of the Catechism were taxed with serious heresy, and no effort spared to bring into discredit especially its doctrine of the holy eucharist. It was necessary to meet this multitudinous outcry with a prompt and vigorous answer; and such an answer accordingly soon appeared, with all due solemnity, in the name of the united theological faculty of Heidelberg. The task of preparing it, however, fell on Ursinus, who showed himself at the same time well able to discharge the service in a truly efficient and becoming way. The honor of the Catechism was fully vindicated, and the effect of the whole controversy was only to render its authority in the Palatinate more firm than before.

Meanwhile the Elector was taken solemnly to account, in a more private way, by several of his brother princes, who seemed to think the whole empire scandalized by his unorthodox conduct. This led to the celebrated conference or debate of Maulbronn; in which the leading theologians of Wirtemberg and the Palatinate came together, for the purpose of bringing the whole difficulty, if possible, to a proper resolution and settlement. The Heidelberg divines, were not themselves in favor of the measure; apprehending more evil from it than good. But they allowed their objections to be over-ruled, not caring to show what might be construed in any quarter, into a want of confidence in their own cause. The conference took place in the month of April, 1564, and lasted we are told, a whole week, from the tenth day of the month to the sixteenth. Among the disputants from Heidelberg, were the Professors, Bocquin, Olevianus and Ursinus. On the other side appeared Brentius, two of the Tübingen Professors, and other distinguished

divines. The burden of the debate, however, was thrown mainly upon Ursinus in the one case, and wholly upon James Andreæ, the great and good chancellor of the University of Tübingen, in the other.

The acts of this *colloquy of Maulbronn* are of the highest value for the history of the German Reformed Church, and serve at the same time to throw a most honorable light on the whole character of Ursinus. They furnish throughout a lively image of his keen penetration, his comprehensive science, and his clear doctrinal precision, as well as a brilliant exemplification of the firmness with which he adhered to his own convictions of truth and right. His distinctions and determinations, especially on the question of the *Ubiquity*, may be regarded as carrying with them a sort of truly classical authority for the Reformed theology in all subsequent times.

The colloquy itself, however, only led afterwards to new controversy. It ended with a compact, indeed, to abstain from public strife, but, unhappily, this was soon forgotten and broken. Both sides, as a matter of course, claimed the victory; and it was not long till an effort was made, on the part of the Wirtemberg divines, to establish this claim in their own favor, by publishing what they called an epitome of the debate in a form to suit themselves; placing the whole discussion, with no small ingenuity and address, in a light by no means fair or satisfactory to the other side. To meet this misrepresentation, the divines of the Palatinate published, in the first place, a copy in full of the proceedings of the colloquy from the official record made at the time; and then added a clear and distinct reply to the Wirtemberg epitome, exposing what they conceived to be its grave offences against truth. This called forth, in the year 1565, the great "*Declaration and Confession of the Theologians of Tübingen on the Majesty of the Man Christ, and the Presence of his Body and Blood in the Holy Supper.*" Then came in reply again from the side of the Palatinate, in 1566, a "*Solid Refutation of the Sophisms and Cavils of the Wirtemberg Divines,*" designed to make clean ground once more of the whole field. The controversy was renewed and continued thus in its full strength; and the author of the Catechism was still required to hold a weapon for its defence in one hand, while he labored on its proper exposition with the other. Both services were well fulfilled.

Among his various apologetic tracts, the chief place is due to the *Exegesis verae doctrinae de Sacramentis et Eucharistia*, published in the name of the Heidelberg Faculty and by order of the Consistory, whose sanction gave it at the same time the force of a public confession. It was translated also into the vernacular tongue, and in a short time went through several editions. It is still a work of great interest and value, as it furnishes the most authentic interpretation, which is anywhere to be found, of the real sacramental doctrine of the Catechism, in the sense which it had in the beginning for Ursinus himself, as well as for the whole theological faculty of Heidelberg.

As just intimated, however, the business of such public apology and defence,

by no means exhausted the labors of Ursinus in regard to this truly admirable symbol. The Catechism was fully enthroned in the Palatinate, from the beginning, as the rule and measure of the public faith. It was made the basis of theological instruction in the University. It was introduced into all the churches and schools, under a regulation which required the whole of it to be gone over in course, in the way of familiar repetition and explanation, once every year. A regular system of catechisation was established in the churches, to which the afternoon of every Lord's day was devoted, and which was so conducted, as to include grown persons as well as children. Ursinus, in his capacity of professor, accommodated himself also to the general rule, and made it a point to go over the text of the Catechism once a year with his theological lectures. This custom he is said to have kept up regularly, on to the year 1577. Notes of his lectures were taken down by the students, which were allowed soon after his death, at three different places, to make their appearance in print. As much injustice was done to him, however, by the defective character of these publications, his particular friend and favorite disciple, David Pareus, who possessed besides all necessary qualifications for the task, was called upon to revise the whole, and to put the work into a form that should be more faithful to the name and spirit of its illustrious author. This service of duty and love could not have fallen into better hands, and no pains were spared now to render the publication complete. Under such properly authentic form, it appeared first in the year 1591, at Heidelberg, in four parts, each furnished with a separate preface by Pareus; since which time, it has gone through numerous editions, in different countries. The Heidelberg Catechism has been honored with an almost countless number of commentaries of later date; but this first one, derived from Ursinus himself through David Pareus, has been generally allowed to be the best that has been written. No other, at all events, can have the same weight as an exposition of its true meaning.

In the midst of other agitations in the year 1564, the plague broke out with great violence in Heidelberg, causing both the court and the University to consult their own safety by withdrawing for a time from the place. During this solemn recess, Ursinus wrote and published a small work on Preparation for Death. It appeared first in Germany, but was translated afterwards into Latin, in which form it is found in the general collection of his Works, under the title of *Pia Meditatio Mortis*.

In the year 1571, he received an urgent call to Lausanne, which he seems to have been somewhat inclined to accept, in view chiefly of the undue burden of his labors at Heidelberg, which was found to be greater than his physical constitution, naturally weak, could well support. To retain him in his place, the Elector allowed him to transfer a portion of his college service to an assistant.

His marriage with Margaret Trautwein, followed the year after, and is represented as having added materially to his comfort and rest. He was at the time nearly forty years of age.

This domestic settlement, however, was not of long duration. With the death of his patron Frederick, in October 1576, the whole religious state of the Palatinate fell once more into disorder. He was succeeded in the electorate by his eldest son, *Louis*, whose previous connections had inspired him with a strong zeal for Lutheranism, in full opposition to the entire course of his father. Before his death, the old prince had sought an interview with his son, wishing to bring him under an engagement, if possible, to respect his views in regard to the church, as expressed in his last will and testament. Louis, however, thought proper to decline the interview, and subsequently showed no regard whatever to his father's directions. On the contrary, he made it his business, from the start, to turn all things into an entirely different train. The clergy, together with the mayor and citizens of Heidelberg, addressed a petition to him, praying for liberty of conscience, and offering one of the churches for the particular use of those who belonged to his confession. His brother, *Duke Casimir*, lent his intercession also, to sustain the request. But it answered no purpose; Louis declared that *his* conscience would not suffer him to receive the petition. The following year, accordingly, he came with his court to Heidelberg, dismissed the preachers, filled all places with Lutheran incumbents, caused a new church service to be introduced, and in one word, changed the public religion into quite another scheme and form. The more prominent theologians were soon compelled to leave their places; among whom of course, were the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism, Olevianus and Ursinus.

Ursinus found an honorable refuge with Prince Casimir, second son of the late Elector, who exercised a small sovereignty of his own at Neustadt, and made it his business to succor and encourage there, as far as he could, the cause now persecuted by his Lutheran brother. The distinguished divine was constituted professor of theology in the Neustadt Gymnasium, which the prince now proposed to raise to the character of something like a substitute, for what the University of Heidelberg had been previously for the Reformed Church. The new institution, under the title of the *Casimirianum*, soon became quite important. It could hardly be otherwise, with such names as Ursinus, Jerome Zanchius, Francis Junius, Daniel Tossanus, John Piscator, in its theological faculty, and others of the like order in other departments. Here Ursinus continued to labor, true to the faith of his own dishonored Catechism, till the day of his death.

His last publication of any importance, was a work of some size, undertaken by order of Prince Casimir, and issued in the name of the Neustadt clergy, in 1581, in review and censure of the celebrated Form of Concord. This was executed with his usual ability, and did good service at the time to the cause of the Reformed Church.

The triumph of Lutheranism in the Palatinate, proved in the end to be short. Before the plan could be fully executed, by which it was proposed to extend the revolution of the capital over the entire province, Prince Louis died, in the midst of his days; and now at once the whole face of things was brought to assume

again a new aspect. The administration of the government fell into the hands of Duke Casimir, who soon after took measures to restore the Reformed faith to its former power and credit. As far as possible, the old professors were once more brought back to the University. The Casimirianum of Neustadt, saw itself shorn by degrees of its transient glory. The Form of Concord sank into disgrace, while its rival standard, the Heidelberg Catechism, rose gloriously into view again as the ecclesiastical banner of the Palatinate. In due time, the whole order of the church was restored as it had stood at the death of Frederick the Pious.

But there was one among the banished theologians of Neustadt, who did *not* return at this time with his colleagues, to the scene of his former labors. The author of the Catechism himself, the learned and pious Ursinus, was not permitted to have part in the triumph to which it was now advanced. His feeble constitution, which had been for some time sinking more and more, under the untiring labors of his profession, gave way finally altogether; and on the 6th of March, 1583, the very year in which Prince Casimir came into power, he was quietly translated to a higher and better world. The event took place in the 49th year of his age.

He was buried in the choir of the church at Neustadt, where his colleagues erected also a suitable monument to his memory. The inscription describes him as a sincere theologian, distinguished for resisting heresies on the person and supper of Christ, an acute philosopher, a prudent man, and an excellent instructor of youth. A funeral oration was pronounced on the occasion in Latin, by Francis Junius, which is still important for the picture it preserves of his mind and character. Its representations, of course, are somewhat rhetorical, and some allowance must be made for the colorings of friendship and grief; but after all proper abatement on this score, it is such a glowing eulogy, as coming from one so intimately familiar with the man, must be allowed to tell greatly to his praise.

His works were published collectively, some time after his death, in three folio volumes, by his friend and disciple, David Pareus.

The leading traits of his character have been already brought into view in some measure, in the sketch now given of his life. An enduring witness of his theological learning, and of his intellectual abilities in general, is found in his works. The best monument of his virtues and moral merits is the influence he exerted while living, and the good name he left behind him throughout the whole Reformed Church at his death, the odor of which has come down to our own time. He was at once a great and a good man.

He seems to have excelled especially as an academic lecturer. His friend, Francis Junius, speaks with high commendation also of his talent for preaching; but his own estimate of himself here was probably more sound, which led him to withdraw from the pulpit in a great measure, as not being his proper sphere. His style and manner were too didactic for its use. For the ends of the lecture room, however, they were all that could be desired. At once full, calm, methodical and clear, his mind flowed here without noise or pomp, in a continuously rich

stream, both gentle and profound, that was felt to diffuse the most wholesome instruction on all sides. He spared no pains to prepare himself fully for his work, and laid himself out to serve as much as possible the wants of his pupils; throwing his soul with living interest into the task in hand, and encouraging them to do so too by presenting difficulties or asking questions at the close of each exercise; which it was his habit then, however, not to answer on the spot, but to hold in reserve for a well studied judgment on the following day.

His diligence seemed to have no bounds. Of this we have the best evidence in the vast amount of the labors and services he performed, in the course of his public life. His parsimony of time, always as gold to the true student, is illustrated by the inscription which he is said to have had in full view, for the benefit of all impertinent visitors, over the door of his study: "*Amice, quisquis huc venis, aut agito paucis, aut abi, aut me laborantem adjuva.*" That is, "Friend, entering here, be short, or go, or else assist me in my work."

This regard for time was with him a sense of duty, and flowed from the general feeling he had, that his powers and his talents were not his own, but belonged to his faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ, and that he had no right to divert them from his service. Altogether his conscientiousness was of the highest order. His funeral orator says of him, that he had never heard an idle word fall from his lips; so careful was he with the government of his thoughts and the regulation of his tongue. He may be said indeed to have fallen a martyr, in some sense, to his own faithfulness; for it was the hard service to which he put himself in the discharge of his professional engagements, that wore out his strength and brought him down finally to the grave.

The modesty and humility of the man were in full keeping with his general integrity, and contributed much to the pleasing effect of his other virtues. His manners were perfectly unassuming, as his spirit also was free from everything that savored of pride or pretension. He seemed to court obscurity, rather than notoriety. Such of his works as appeared in his own life-time, were published anonymously, or in the name of the Heidelberg faculty; while the greater part of them never saw the light at all in any such form, till after his death.

Altogether, as we have before seen, he was of a reserved, retiring nature; formed for meditation and self-communion; averse from all noise and strife; mystical as well as logical, and no less contemplative than intelligent and acute; a true heir in this respect of Melancthon's spirit, as well as a true follower of his faith. For theological controversy, though doomed to live in it all his days, he had just as little taste as his illustrious preceptor himself; and when forced to take part in it, one might say of him that scarce the smell of its usual fire was allowed to pass on his garments; so equal was he still, and calm and mild, in the conduct of his own cause, avoiding as far as possible all offensive personalities, and bending his whole force only on the actual merits of the question in debate. On the other hand, however, no one could be more decided and firm in this calm

way, when it was necessary to withstand error or maintain truth. In this respect he was superior to Melancthon, less yielding and more steadily true to the chart and compass of his own creed.

He was charged by some with being sour and morose. But this was nothing more, probably, than the construction, which his reserved and earnest character naturally carried with it for those who were not able to sympathise with such a spirit, or who saw him only as it were from a distance and not near at hand. It is characteristic of such a soft and quiet nature, to be at the same time ardent, and excitable on occasions even to passion; and it is not unlikely, that in the case of Ursinus, this natural tendency may have been strengthened at times by the morbid habit of his body, disturbing and clouding the proper serenity of his mind. Francis Junius describes him as just the reverse of the charges now noticed, and as made up of self-forgetting condescension and kindness towards all who came in his way.

The same witness, than whom we could have no better, bears the most honorable testimony also to his habits of devotion and personal piety. Religion with him was not a theory merely, but a business of life. He walked with God, and showed himself thus a worthy follower of those who through faith and patience have entered into the rewards of his kingdom.

On the whole, we may say, it is a great honor for the German Reformed Church to be represented in the beginning by so excellent a man; and it is not going too far perhaps to add, that the type of his character has entered powerfully into the true historical spirit of this communion, as distinguished from all other branches of the same faith. Such is the prerogative of genius, and such its high and lofty commission in the world. It stamps its own image, for ages, on what it has power to create.

J. W. N.

Note. — In the preparation of this article, use has been made of the following works: Alting's *Historia de Ecclesiis Palatinis;* H. S. Van Alpen's *Geschichte und Literatur des Heidelberg'schen Katechismus;* Planck's *Geschichte der protestantischen Theologie;* Bayle's *Dictionary art. Ursinus;* Seisen's *Geschichte der Reformation zu Heidelberg;* K. F. Vierordt's *Geschichte der Reformation im Grossherzogthum Baden;* Ebrard's *Das Dogma vom Heil. Abendmahl und seine Geschichte.* Reference may also be made to the writer's own work on the *History and Genius of the Heidelberg Catechism.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

General Prolegomena.

	Page
What the doctrine of the church is	1
What the parts of this doctrine are, with their differences	2
In what the doctrine of the church differs from that of other systems of religion, philosophy, &c.	3
By what testimonies the truth of the Christian religion, or the doctrine of the church is confirmed	6
How mani-fold the method of teaching and learning the doctrine of the church is	9

Special Prolegomena.

What Catechising is	10
Of the origin of Catechisation	11
Of the parts or principal heads of the doctrine of the Catechism	13
Of the necessity of Catechisation	14
What the design of Catechism and the doctrine of the church is	16

Of true Christian Comfort.

What Comfort is	17
The parts of which it consists	18
Why this comfort alone is solid	19
Why it is necessary	20
How this comfort may be obtained	20

Of the misery of man.

What it is, and whence it may be known	23
What the law of God requires	23

Of the creation of man.

The state in which man was originally created	27
The end for which God created man	28

Of the image of God in man.

	Page
What it is, and what the parts thereof	30
To what extent it is lost, and what remains	31
How it may be restored in us	32

Of the fall and first sin of man.

What the sin of our first parents was	33
What the causes of it were	34
What the effects thereof	35
Why God permitted it	35

Of sin in general.

The proofs of our sinfulness	36
What sin is	37
Original sin, and what it is	39
The proofs of original sin	40
Objections against original sin refuted	41
Actual sin	44
Reigning sin and sin not reigning	44
Mortal and venial sin	45
Sin against the conscience, &c.	45
The sin against the Holy Ghost	47
Rules to be observed in reference to the sin against the Holy Ghost	47
Sin per se, and sin by accident	47
The causes of sin	49
The effects of sin	54

The freedom of the will.

The principal question to be considered in reference to this subject	56
What the freedom of the will is	57
In what the Liberty which is in God differs from that which is in his creatures, angels and men	58
Whether there be any Freedom of the human will	61
What Liberty belongs to man according to his four-fold state	62
The question, whether God does any injustice to man, by requiring from him in his law what he cannot perform, considered	66
The punishment of sin	67
How this comports with the mercy of God	69

Concerning afflictions.

How many kinds of affliction there are	70
A table of the afflictions of man	72
The causes of afflictions	72
Comforts under afflictions	74

The deliverance of man.

	Page
In how many ways satisfaction may be made	77
What the deliverance of man is	78
Whether such a deliverance be possible	78
Whether deliverance be necessary and certain	81
Whether perfect deliverance may be expected	81
How this deliverance is acomplished	82
The question whether we ourselves can make this satisfaction, considered	82
The question whether any mere creature can make satisfaction for us, considered	84
What sort of a mediator we must seek for	84
Why he must be very man and perfectly righteous	85
Why he must be very God	87

The doctrine of the Mediator.

What a mediator is	92
Whether we need a mediator	92
What the office of the mediator is	94
What kind of a mediator is necessary	95
Who this mediator is	95
Whether there can be more than one mediator	96

The Covenant of God.

What this covenant is	97
Whether it be one or more	98
In what the old and new Covenants agree and differ	99

Of the Gospel.

What the Gospel is	101
The question, Whether the gospel has always been known, considered	102
In what the Gospel differs from the Law	104
What the effects of the Gospel are	105
From what the truth of the Gospel appears	105
The question, Whether all men as they perished in Adam, are saved in Christ, considered	106

The subject of Faith.

What faith is	108
How many kinds of faith there are	108
In what faith and hope differ	112
What the causes of faith are	112
What the effects of faith	113
To whom faith is given	113

Page

The assurance of faith, with a refutation of certain objections - - 114
The objects or contents of faith - - - - - - 116

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

Why it is called apostolic - - - - - - - 117
Why other creeds were introduced - - - - - 117
Why the greatest authority should be attached to the Apostles' Creed - 118
The division of the Creed - - - - - - - 119

CONCERNING THE ONE TRUE GOD.

The evidences of the existence of God - - - - - 121
Who, and what God is - - - - - - - 123
The unity of God - - - - - - - - 128
What the terms Essence, Person, and Trinity signify, and in what they differ - - - - - - - - - 129
Whether the church should retain these terms - - - - 132
The number of persons in the Godhead - - - - - 133
How these persons are distinguished - - - - - 135
Why the church should retain the doctrine of the Trinity - - 137
Objections against the doctrine of the Trinity refuted - - - 138

OF GOD THE FATHER.

What it is to believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker, &c. - 139

OF THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

Whether God created the world - - - - - - 141
How God created the world - - - - - - 143
The end for which God created the world - - - - 145

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

Whether there be any providence of God - - - - - 148
Arguments from the works of God - - - - - 148
Arguments from the nature and attributes of God - - - 150
What the Providence of God is - - - - - - 151
A table of those things which fall under the providence of God - - 155
Objections to this doctrine refuted - - - - - 157
The benefit and use of this doctrine - - - - - 163

OF GOD THE SON, AND THE NAMES WHICH ARE APPLIED TO HIM.

CONCERNING THE NAME JESUS.

What it imports - - - - - - - - - 164
The difference between this Jesus and other saviours - - - 166
What it is to believe in Jesus - - - - - - 168
The question, Whether such as seek their salvation out of Jesus really believe in him, considered. - - - - - - - - 168

Concerning the name, Christ.

Page
What the anointing of Christ signifies 170
What the prophetical office of Christ is 172
What the priestly office of Christ is 174
What the kingly office of Christ is 176
What the term Christian imports 176
What the prophetical, priestly, and regal dignity of Christians consists in 170

Of the only begotten Son of God.

In what sense Christ is the only begotten Son of God . . . 181
A table of the Sons of God 183

The Divinity of Christ.

Whether Christ was a subsistent or person before he assumed our nature . 185
Whether he is a person distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost . 192
Whether he is equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost . . 193
Whether he is consubstantial 196
General rules according to which an answer may be given to the sophisms of heretics 197
Special rules serving the same ends 198
A refutation of the sophisms against the Divinity of the Son . . 200

Concerning the name, Lord.

In what sense Christ is called Lord 202
In how many ways, and why he is called our Lord . . . 203
What it is to believe in Christ, our Lord 204

Of the conception and nativity of Christ.

What Christ's conception by the Holy Ghost means . . . 205
Why he was born of the Virgin Mary 206
The profit of Christ's holy conception and nativity . . . 207
What it is, to believe in the conception and nativity of Christ . . 207

Of the two natures in Christ.

Whether there be two natures in Christ 208
Whether these two natures constitute one or more persons . . 210
What the hypostatical union is 211
Why it was necessary to constitute this union 211

The sufferings of Christ.

What the term passion signifies 212
Whether Christ suffered according to both natures . . . 215
What the moving causes of his passion were 216

Page

What the final causes, or fruits 216
The question, Why Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate, considered . 217
Whether there is any thing more in his being crucified, than if he had died some other death 218

The death and burial of Christ.

How Christ is said to have been dead 219
Whether the death of Christ was necessary 220
Whether Christ died for all 221
Why Christ was buried 225
Why believers must die 226
The benefits, or fruits of Christ's death 227

Christ's descent into hell.

What Christ's descent into hell signifies 228
What the fruits of his descent into hell are 232

The resurrection of Christ.

Whether Christ rose from the dead 233
How Christ rose from the dead 234
Why he rose 235
The fruits or benefits of Christ's resurrection 238

The ascension of Christ.

Whither Christ ascended 242
How Christ ascended 243
Certain objections of the Ubiquitarians refuted 247
For what purpose Christ ascended 249
In what Christ's ascension differs from ours 251
What the fruits of Christ's ascension are 251

Christ's sitting at the right hand of the Father.

What the right hand of God signifies 254
What it is to sit at the right hand of God 254
Whether Christ always sat at the right hand of God 257
What the fruits of Christ's sitting at the right hand of God are . . 259

Christ's return to Judgment.

Whether there be a future judgment 260
What the final judgment is 262
Who the Judge will be 264
Whence and whither he will come 265

Page

How he will come 265
Whom he will judge 266
What the process, sentence and execution of the final judgment will be . 266
The objects of this judgment 267
When this judgment will take place 267
The reasons why we should look for it 268
The reasons why God has not revealed the time when it will take place . 268
Why it is deferred 269
Whether it may be desired 269

Of God the Holy Ghost.

What the term Spirit signifies 270
Who and what the Holy Ghost is 271
What the office of the Holy Ghost 277
What, and how mani-fold the gifts of the Holy Ghost are . . . 279
By whom and why the Holy Ghost was given 280
To whom and to what extent he is given 281
When and how the Holy Ghost is given and received . . . 281
How the Holy Ghost may be retained 283
Whether and how the Holy Ghost may be lost 283
Why the Holy Ghost is necessary 284
How we may know that the Holy Ghost is in us 285

The Church.

What the church is 286
How mani-fold it is 286
What the marks of the true church are 288
Why the church is called one, holy and Catholic 289
In what the church differs from the state 291
The cause of the difference between the church and the rest of mankind . 292
Whether there is any salvation out of the church 292

The Eternal Predestination of God.

Whether there be any predestination 293
What it is 297
What the causes of it are 297
What the effects of it are 300
Whether it be unchangeable 300
To what extent it may be known 301
Whether the elect are always members of the church and the reprobate never 302
Whether the elect may fall from the church and the reprobate always remain in it 303
What the use of this doctrine is 303

The communion of saints.

	Page
What the communion of saints is	304

The forgiveness of sins.

What the forgiveness of sins is	305
By whom forgiveness of sins is granted	306
On account of what is forgiveness granted	307
Whether forgiveness of sins agrees with divine justice	307
Whether it be gratuitous	308
To whom it is granted	308
How and when it is granted	308

The resurrection of the body.

Whether the soul be immortal	309
Where the soul is when separated from the body	311
What the resurrection is, and what the errors in reference to it	312
From what the truth of a future resurrection is inferred	313
The kind of bodies which will rise in the resurrection	315
How the resurrection will be effected	316
When it will take place	316
By whose power the dead will be raised	317
Why and to what state the dead will be raised	317

The life everlasting.

What everlasting life is	319
By whom it is given	321
To whom it is given	321
Why it is given	322
How it is given	322
When it is given	323
Whether and whence we may be assured of it	323

The doctrine of Justification.

What righteousnes in general is	325
How mani-fold it is	325
In what righteousness differs from justification	326
What our righteousness before God is	327
How the satisfaction of Christ is made ours	328
Why it is made ours	330
Why we are justified by faith only	331
Why our good works cannot justify us	333
How a reward is promised to our works	334
Whether this doctrine makes men careless	335
Other objections to this doctrine refuted	836

The sacraments in general.

	Page
What sacraments are	341
What the designs of the sacraments	344
In what sacraments differ from sacrifices	345
In what the sacraments of the Old and New Testaments agree and differ	346
What the signs are; and what the things signified in the sacraments, and in what they differ	347
What the sacramental union is	348
What sacramental phrases are	349
What the lawful use of the sacraments consists in	350
What the ungodly receive in the sacraments	351
What the sacraments and word have in common, and in what they differ	352
How many sacraments there are	353
Theses concerning the sacraments in general	354

Holy Baptism.

What Baptism is	357
What the ends of Baptism are	358
The institution of Baptism, and what the words of the institution signify	362
What the lawful use of Baptism consists in	363
Sacramental phrases in reference to Baptism	364
The question of infant Baptism considered	366
The objections of the Anabaptists refuted	368
Theses concerning Baptism	371

Of circumcision.

What circumcision is	374
Why circumcision was instituted	374
Why it was abolished	375
What there is in the place of circumcision	375
In what circumcision and baptism agree and differ	376
Why Christ was circumcised	376

The Lord's Supper.

What the Lord's Supper is	377
What the design of it is	379
In what the Lord's Supper differs from Baptism	380
The institution of the Supper and the true sense of the words of the institution	382
The controversy respecting the words of the institution of the holy Supper	390
Four classes of arguments in favor of the orthodox interpretation of the words of Christ	391
The testimony of the Fathers	403
Of transubstantiation	406
Of consubstantiation	407
The schism of the Consubstantialists	410

Page

Objections in favor of consubstantiation refuted - - - - 412
The difference between the Lord's Supper and the Popish Mass - - 416
For whom the Lord's Supper was instituted - - - - 424
What the wicked receive in the use of the Supper - - - 426
What the lawful use of the Supper consists in - - - - 428
Whom the church should admit to the Supper - - - - 429
Certain arguments of the Consubstantialists noticed - - - 435
The general points in which the churches professing the gospel agree and differ in the controversy respecting the Lord's Supper - - 435

The Passover.

What the Passover was - - - - - - - 437
What the design of the Passover was - - - - - 438
The points of resemblance between Christ and the Paschal Lamb - 439
Whether the Passover be abolished - - - - - 440

The keys of the kingdom of heaven.

What the power of the keys given to the church is - - - 441
Whether ecclesiastical discipline be necessary - - - - 442
How it is to be exercised - - - - - - 446
What the design of it is, and what abuses are to be avoided - - 448
In what the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven differs from civil power - - - - - - - - - - 450
A disputation respecting excommunication - - - - 453

Of Thankfulness.

What thankfulness is - - - - - - - 464
Why it is necessary - - - - - - - 465

Man's conversion to God.

Whether conversion be necessary - - - - 468
What conversion to God is - - - - - - 468
What the parts of man's conversion are - - - - - 470
What the causes of it - - - - - - - 472
What the fruits of it - - - - - - - 474
Whether it be perfect in this life - - - - - 474
In what the repentance of the godly differs from that of the ungodly - 475

Concerning good works.

What good works are - - - - - - - 476
A table of good works - - - - - - - 479
How they may be performed - - - - - - 479
Whether the works of the regenerate are perfectly good - - 481

Page
How they please God - - - - - - 482
Why they should be done - - - - - - - 482
Whether they merit any thing in the sight of God - - - 485

The Law of God.

What the law of God is - - - - - - - 489
What the parts of the law and their differences - - - 490
To what extent the law has been abrogated - - - - 492
In what the law differs from the gospel - - - - - 497
The division of the law - - - - - - - 498
A table of the division of the Decalogue - - - - 502
General rules for the understanding of the Decalogue - - - 502
Theses concerning the Decalogue - - - - - 505

The first commandment.

The preface to the Decalogue considered - - - - 507
The design of this commandment - - - - - 507
The virtues of the first commandment - - - - - 508

The second commandment.

The design of this commandment - - - - - 517
What it prohibits and sanctions - - - - - - 517
Of human precepts and the authority of tradition - - - 519
Whether all statues and images are here forbidden - - - 525
Whether all worshipping of images is forbidden - - - 528
Why images are not to be tolerated in our churches . . . 530
How and by whom they are to be removed - - - - 531
Objections against the removal of images refuted - - - 532
The exhortation added to this commandment considered - - - 534

The third commandment.

What the name of God signifies - - - - - - 536
What this commandment forbids, and enjoins, with the design thereof - 337
The virtues of this commandment, with the vices opposed thereto - 537
The arguments of the Papists in favor of the invocation of the saints considered and refuted - - - - - - - 542

The doctrine of the oath.

What an oath is - - - - - - - - 549
By whom we are to swear - - - - - - - 550
Whether it is lawful for Christians to take an oath - - - 551
What oaths are lawful and what unlawful - - - - 554
Whether all oaths should be kept - - - - - 554

The fourth commandment.

	Page
The design of this commandment	557
An explanation of the words of the commandment	558
What and how mani-fold the sabbath is	561
How far the sabbath pertains to us	564
The design of the sabbath	566
How it is sanctified and how profaned	566
The virtues of this commandment, with the vices opposed thereto	567

The ecclesiastical ministry.

What the ministry of the church is	571
Why it was instituted	571
What the grades of ministers are	572
What the duties of ministers	572
To whom the ministry should be committed	573

Concerning ceremonies.

What ceremonies are	573
In what they differ from moral works	573
How many kinds of ceremonies there are	574
Whether the church may institute ceremonies	574

The fifth commandment.

Why obedience to the second table is necessary	575
The design of this commandment	575
The commandment itself	575
The promise annexed thereto	576
The virtues peculiar to superiors	577
The virtues peculiar to inferiors	579
The virtues common to both	580

The sixth commandment.

The design of this commandment	584
The virtues which do not injure the safety of men	585
The virtues which contribute to the safety of men	586
A table of the sixth commandment	587

The seventh commandment.

The design of this commandment	587
The virtues of this commandment	588
Three classes of lusts	589

Of marriage.

What marriage is	592
Why it was instituted	592

Page

What marriages are lawful 593
Whether it be a thing indifferent 594
What the duties of married persons are 594
What things are contrary to marriage 595

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

The design of this commandment 595
The virtues of the eighth commandment 596
Ten kinds of contracts 596
Objections against the division of property 599

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

The design of this commandment 600
The virtues of this commandment with the vices opposed thereto . . 601

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT.

The commandment respecting concupiscence one and not two . . 605
The design of this commandment 605
The principal arguments of the Pelagians 606

THE POSSIBILITY OF OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW.

How the law was possible before the fall, and how since the fall . . 608
Objections against the imperfection of the works of the regenerate . 609

THE USE OF THE LAW.

The useof the ceremonial law 612
The use of the judicial law 612
The use of the moral law in nature as pure and holy . . . 612
In nature fallen and depraved 613
In nature restored by Christ 613
In nature perfectly glorified 615
Principal arguments of the Antinomians against the use of the law . 615

OF PRAYER.

What prayer is 619
Why it is necessary 620
What the conditions of acceptable prayer are 621
The Lord's Prayer 624
The preface to the Lord's Prayer 626

THE FIRST PETITION.

What the name of God signifies 630
What it is to hallow the name of God 630

The second petition.

	Page
What the kingdom of God is	632
How mani-fold it is	633
Who the Head and King is	634
Who the subjects are	634
What the laws are	634
What benefits pertain to the subjects of this kingdom	635
Who the enemies of this kingdom are	635
Where it is administered	635
How long it will continue	635
How it comes to us	636
Why we should pray for the coming of this kingdom	636

The third petition.

What the Will of God is	637
What we desire in this petition, and in what it differs from the second	637
Why it is necessary	639
Why it is added, As in heaven	640

The fourth petition.

Why temporal blessings should be prayed for	642
How they should be prayed for	643
Why Christ comphehends temporal blessings under the term bread	643
Why Christ calls it our bread	644
Why Christ calls it daily bread	645
Why Christ adds, This day	645
Whether it be lawful to pray for riches	645
Whether it be lawful to lay any thing by for the time to come	646

The fifth petition.

What Christ means by debts	648
What it is to forgive debts	649
Why we should desire the forgiveness of sins	650
How our sins are remitted unto us	650

The sixth petition.

What temptation is	353
What it is to lead into temptation	654
What is implied in delivering us from evil	655
Why this petition is necessary	655
What is the benefit of this petition	656
The order and connection of these petitions	657
The conclusion of this prayer	658
The meaning of the word, Amen	659

COMMENTARY OF URSINUS.

PROLEGOMENA

WITH REFERENCE TO THE CATECHISM OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION WHICH WAS PREPARED FOR, AND TAUGHT IN THE SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES OF THE PALATINATE.

THESE PROLEGOMENA are partly general, such as treat of the entire doctrine of the Church: and partly special, such as have respect merely to the Catechism.

The general prolegomena, concerning the doctrine of the church, may be included in the following questions:

I. *What is the doctrine of the church?*

II. *What are the parts thereof and in what do these parts differ from each other?*

III. *Wherein does the doctrine of the Church differ from that of the various Sects, and from Philosophy, and why these distinctions should be retained?*

IV. *What are the evidences of the truth and certainty of this doctrine?*

V. *What are the various methods of teaching and studying this doctrine?*

I. WHAT IS THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH?

The doctrine of the church is the entire and uncorrupted doctrine of the law and gospel concerning the true God, together with his will, works, and worship; divinely revealed, and comprehended in the writings of the prophets and apostles, and confirmed by many miracles and divine testimonies; through which the Holy Spirit works effectually in the hearts of the elect, and gathers from the whole human race an everlasting church, in which God is glorified, both in this, and in the life to come.

This doctrine is the chief and most expressive mark of the true church, which God designs to be visible in the world, and to be separated from the rest of mankind, according to these declarations of scripture: "Keep yourselves from idols." "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." "If there come any unto you and bring not this *doctrine*, receive him not into your houses, neither bid him God speed." "Be ye holy, touch no unclean thing, ye that bear the vessels of the Lord. Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (1 John 5. 21. 2 Cor. 6. 17. 2 John 10. Isa. 52. 11. Rev. 18. 4.)

God wills that his church be separate and distinct from the world, for the following considerations: *First*, on account of his own glory; for, as

he himself will not be joined with idols and devils, so he will not have his truth confounded with falsehood, and his church with her enemies, the children of the devil; but will have them carefully distinguished and separated. It would be reproachful to God to suppose that he would have and acknowledge as his children, such as persecute him; yea, it would be blasphemy to make God the author of false doctrine, and the defender of the wicked; for "what concord has Christ with Beliel." (2 Cor. 6. 14.) *Secondly*, on account of the consolation and salvation of his people; for it is necessary that the church should be visible in the world, that the elect, scattered abroad among the whole human race, may know with what society they ought to unite themselves, and that, being gathered into the church, they may enjoy this sure comfort, that they are members of that family in which God delights, and which has the promises of everlasting life. For it is the will of God that all those who are to be saved, should be gathered into the church in this life. Out of the church there is no salvation.

How the church may be known, and what are the marks by which it may be distinguished from the various sects, will be shown when we come to speak regularly upon the subject of the church. We may, however, here say, that there are three marks by which the church is known: Purity of doctrine—the proper use of the sacraments, and obedience to God according to all the parts of this doctrine, whether of faith or practice. And if it be here objected, that great vices have often made their appearance in the church, we would reply that these are not defended and adhered to by the church, as by the various sects. Yea, the church is the first to censure and condemn them. Hence, if there are faults in the church, these are disapproved of and removed. As long as this state of things lasts, so long the church remains.

II. What are the parts of the Doctrine of the Church, and in what do they differ from each other?

The doctrine of the church consists of two parts: the Law, and the Gospel; in which we have comprehended the sum and substance of the sacred Scriptures. The law is called the Decalogue, and the gospel is the doctrine concerning Christ the mediator, and the free remission of sins, through faith. This division of the doctrine of the church is established by these plain and forcible arguments.

1. The whole doctrine comprised in the sacred writings, is either concerning the nature of God, his will, his works, or sin, which is the proper work of men and devils. But all these subjects are fully set forth and taught, either in the law, or in the gospel, or in both. Therefore, the law and gospel are the chief and general divisions of the holy scriptures, and comprise the entire doctrine comprehended therein.

2. Christ himself makes this division of the doctrine which he will have preached in his name, when he says, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name." (Luke 24. 46, 47.) But this embraces the entire substance of the law and gospel.

3. The writings of the prophets and apostles, comprise the old and new Testament, or covenant between God and man. It is, therefore, necessary

that the principal parts of the covenant should be contained and explained in these writings, and that they should declare what God promises and grants unto us, viz: his favor, remission of sins, righteousness, and eternal life; and also what he, in return, requires from us: which is faith and obedience. These, now, are the things which are taught in the law and gospel.

4. Christ is the substance and ground of the entire Scriptures. But the doctrine contained in the law and gospel is necessary to lead us to a knowledge of Christ and his benefits: for the law is our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ, constraining us to fly to him, and showing us what that righteousness is, which he has wrought out, and now offers unto us. But the gospel, professedly, treats of the person, office, and benefits of Christ. Therefore we have, in the law and gospel, the whole of the Scriptures, comprehending the doctrine revealed from heaven for our salvation.

The principal DIFFERENCES between these two parts of the doctrine of the church, consist in these three things:

1. In the subject, or general character of the doctrine, peculiar to each. The law prescribes and enjoins what is to be done, and forbids what ought to be avoided: whilst the gospel announces the free remission of sin, through and for the sake of Christ.

2. In the manner of the revelation peculiar to each. The law is known from nature; the gospel is divinely revealed.

3. In the promises which they make to man. The law promises life upon the condition of perfect obedience; the gospel, on the condition of faith in Christ and the commencement of new obedience. Hereafter, however, more will be said upon this subject in the proper place.

III. In what does the Doctrine of the Church differ from that of other Religions, and from Philosophy: and why these distinctions should be retained?

The doctrine of the church differs from that of all other religions, in four respects. *First:* the doctrine of the church has God for its author, by whom it was delivered, through the prophets and apostles, whilst the various religious systems of sectarists have been invented by men, through the suggestion of the devil. *Secondly:* the doctrine of the church alone, has such divine testimony in confirmation of its truth, as is sure and infallible, and which is calculated to quiet the conscience, and convict all the various sects of error. *Thirdly:* in the church the law of God is retained entire and uncorrupted, whilst in other systems of religion it is narrowed down and basely corrupted; for the advocates of these false religions entirely reject the doctrine of the first table, concerning the knowledge and worship of the true God, either setting forth some other God besides him who has revealed himself to the church by his word and works, and seeking a knowledge of God, not in his Son, but out of him, or worshipping him otherwise than he has commanded in his word. And not only so, but they are also equally ignorant of the inward and spiritual obedience of the second table; and whatever truth and excellence there is in these systems of religion, it is nothing more than a part of the precepts of the second table, in relation to the external deportment of the life, and the civil duties which men owe to each other. *Fourthly:* it is only in the church that the

gospel of Christ is fully taught, and rightly understood; for the various sects, such as the Ethnics, the Philosophers, Jews, and Turks, are either entirely ignorant of it, and thus reject it, or else they add to their errors what little they have culled from the doctrine of the apostles; the use of which, however, they do not properly apprehend nor understand; as is true of the Arians, Papists, Anabaptists, and all other heretics; some of whom hold errors concerning the person, and others concerning the office of Christ, the mediator. These great distinctions prove that the doctrine of the church alone should be taught and held fast to, whilst the doctrines and religious systems of the sects which oppose the truth, should be rejected and shunned, as the perversions and wicked devices of the devil; according as it is said, "Beware of false prophets." And, "Keep yourselves from idols." (Matt. 7. 15. 1 John 5. 21.)

It is, however, different with *Philosophy*. True philosophy, although it also differs very much from the doctrine of the church, yet, it does not array itself against it, nor is it a wicked fabrication, and device of Satan, as is true of the false doctrines of the Sects; but it contains truth, and is, as it were, a certain ray of the wisdom of God, impressed upon the mind of man in his creation. It is a doctrine that has respect to God and his creatures, and many other things that are good and profitable to mankind, and has been drawn out from the light of nature, and from principles in themselves clear and evident, and reduced to a system by wise and earnest men. It follows, therefore, that it is not only lawful, but also profitable, for christians to devote themselves to the study of philosophy; whilst, on the other hand, it is not proper for them to devote themselves to the study of the various doctrines of the sects; because these are all to be detested and avoided, as the wicked devices of the devil.

Philosophy and the doctrine of the church differ, especially in the following respects. *First:* in their principles. Philosophy is altogether natural, and is constructed and based upon principles deduced from nature. And, although there are many things in the doctrine of the church, which may be known from nature, yet the chief and principal part of it, which is the gospel, is so far beyond and above nature, that, unless the Son of God had revealed it unto us from the bosom of the Father, no wisdom of men or of angels could have discovered it. *Secondly:* they differ in their subjects; for, whilst the doctrine of the church comprehends the true sense and meaning of the law and gospel, philosophy is entirely ignorant of the gospel, omits the most important parts of the law, and explains very obscurely and imperfectly, those parts which it embraces in relation to civil duties, and the external deportment of the life, gathered from some few precepts of the Decalogue. And not only so, but philosophy also teaches some of the arts and sciences, which are useful and profitable; such as Logic, Natural Philosophy, and Mathematics, which we do not find in the doctrine of the church, but which, nevertheless, have an important influence upon the interests of society, when taught and understood. *Thirdly:* they differ in their effects. The doctrine of the church alone traces all the evils and miseries which are incident to man to their true source, which is to be found in the fall and disobedience of our first parents in Paradise. It, moreover, ministers true and solid comfort to the conscience, pointing out the way by which we may escape the miseries of sin and death, and, at the same time, assures us of everlasting life, through

our Lord Jesus Christ. But philosophy is ignorant of the true cause of all our evils, and can neither bestow nor direct us to that comfort which can satisfy the desires of the human heart.

There are, however, certain comforts which are common, both to philosophy and theology; among which, we may mention the doctrine of the providence of God, the necessity of obeying the law, a good conscience, the excellency of virtue, the ultimate designs which virtue proposes, the examples of others, the hope of reward, and a comparison of the different events and circumstances of life. But those greater and more precious comforts, by which the soul is sustained and supported, when exposed to the dreadful evils of sin and death, are peculiar to the church, and consist in the free remission of sin, by and for the sake of Christ, the grace and presence of God under these evils, together with final deliverance and eternal life.

But, although true philosophy be insufficient to meet the full demands of our moral nature, and, although it may be imperfect, as compared with theology, yet it does not oppose, and array itself against the doctrine of the church, as though it were hostile to it. Hence, whatever erroneous sentiments, such as are in plain opposition to the truth of God's word, are found in the writings of the different philosophers, and which are brought forward, by heretics, for the purpose of controverting and overthrowing the true sense of the Scriptures, these are either not philosophical, being nothing more than the subtle devices of human ingenuity, and the very ulcers of true philosophy, as the opinion of Aristotle concerning the creation of the world, and that of Epicurus concerning the immortality of the soul, &c., or they are indeed philosophical, but inappropriately applied to theology.

These distinctions between the doctrine of the church and that of other religions, and of philosophy also, should be observed and maintained, for these reasons. *First:* that all the glory which properly belongs to God may be attributed to him, which cannot be done unless we acknowledge and confess whatever he will have us to believe concerning himself and his will, and unless we add nothing to these revelations which he has been pleased to make of himself; for God cannot be joined with idols, neither can his truth be mingled with the lies and falsehood of Satan, without casting the greatest reproach upon his name. *Secondly:* that we may not endanger our salvation, which might occur if we were to be deceived, and embrace philosophy or the teaching of some one of the sects, for the true religion. *Thirdly:* that our faith and comfort may be increased, by seeing the superior excellency of the doctrine of the church to the teachings of all other systems of religion; and how many things are found in the religion of the Bible, which are wholly wanting in all others; and why it is that only those who confess and hold to the teachings of the word of God are saved, whilst all the various sects, with their adherents, are condemned and rejected of God. *Finally:* that we may separate ourselves from the Epicureans and Academics, who either despise everything like godliness, or so pervert it as to suppose that every man who professes some form of religion will be saved, thus interpreting the declaration of the apostle where he says, "The just shall live by his faith." (Rom. 1. 17.) Now, as far as it respects these Epicureans, they are not worthy of being refuted; and as for the Academics, they evidently wrest the declaration

of the Apostle from its proper signification, and may, therefore, easily be refuted; for the pronoun *his* never signifies that faith which any man may imagine, or frame for himself, but it signifies the true Catholic faith, peculiar to every one that has embraced the gospel of Christ; and thus it opposes the faith of every other man, even though it be true; and also the doctrine of justification by works. Hence, the true sense of this passage of Scripture is, The just man is justified, not by the works of the law, but only by faith in Christ, and that by his own peculiar faith, and not by the faith of another man.

IV. What are the evidences by which the truth of the Christian Religion, or the Doctrine of the Church is confirmed?

There are a great number of arguments which go to establish the truth and certainty of the teachings of the church, some of which convince the conscience; as is the case with the first XIII, which we here subjoin, whilst those which follow, incline and convert the heart. These arguments we shall present in the following order:

1. *The purity and perfection of the Law.* It is not possible that that religion should be true and divine, which either invents and tolerates idols, or approves of those forms of wickedness which are in plain opposition to the law of God and the judgment of sound reason. Now all the different forms of religion, except that which has been revealed in the sacred Scriptures, and which is received and acknowledged by the church, evidently do this. For all of them, (as has already been said,) either entirely abrogate the first table of the Decalogue, which has respect to the one true God and his worship, or they shamefully corrupt it; whilst they, at the same time, retain only a small part of the second table, relating to external propriety, and civil duties. It is only the church that retains both tables of the Decalogue entire and uncorrupted, according to the Scriptures. Hence, it is only the doctrine of the church that is true and divine.

2. The same may be argued from *the gospel*, which points out the only way of escape and deliverance from sin and death; for, most assuredly, that doctrine and religion is true and divine which reveals a method of deliverance from these great evils, without doing any violence to the justice of God, and which administers solid comfort to the conscience, in relation to everlasting life. Now, as the doctrine of the church is the only system of religious truth that has ever discovered and proclaimed a way of deliverance from the evils of sin and death, which alone affords real and substantial comfort to the conscience, it must be true and divine.

3. *The great antiquity* of this doctrine affords evidence of its truth; for no other system of religious truth besides that which we have delivered in the Holy Scriptures, can trace its origin to God, and prove its certain and continual descent from the beginning of the world. All the various histories of the world unite their testimony with that of sacred history, in affirming that all other religions took their origin subsequent to this, and are new in comparison with it. Inasmuch, therefore, as the most ancient religion challenges the highest regard, and has the strongest evidence of truth, (for men ordinarily receive and regard the first religion as having come immediately from God,) it follows that the doctrine of the church alone is true and divine.

4. The *miracles* by which God confirmed the truth of this doctrine, from the beginning of the world, bear testimony to its divine character; which miracles the devil cannot imitate, even as far as it has respect to their external appearance; such as the raising of the dead, making the sun stand still and go backward, the dividing of the sea and rivers, making the barren fruitful, and others of a similar character, all of which bear the strongest testimony to the truth and divine character of this doctrine, inasmuch as they were wrought by God, (who could not bear such testimony to what is false,) for the confirmation of those things which were spoken by the prophets and apostles.

5. The *prophecies and predictions*, of which there are very many, both in the old and new Testament, that have received a most complete and exact fulfilment, establish in the most satisfactory and conclusive manner the divine character of the teachings of the church, inasmuch as no one but God can utter such declarations.

6. The *harmony* of the different parts of the doctrine of the church, is an evidence of its truth. That doctrine which contradicts itself can neither be true, nor from God, since truth is in perfect harmony with itself, and God cannot contradict himself. And as all other religions, except that which is taught in the writings of the prophets and apostles, differ very much from and among each other, even in points which are regarded chief and fundamental, this alone, which harmonizes so fully and perfectly in all its various parts, must be true and from God.

7. The acknowledgement of the superior excellency of the christian religion by its enemies, may be urged as an argument in favor of its truth. The devil himself was constrained to confess, "Thou art Christ, the Son of God." (Luke 4. 41.) Other enemies have also been repeatedly induced to bear testimony to the superior excellency of the teachings of the church. Yea, it may be said that whatever goodness and truth may be found in other religions, the same is also contained in the religion of the Bible, only much more clearly and fully; and it may very easily be shown that they have borrowed these things from the teachings of the church, and that they have commingled them with their own inventions, as the devil himself is accustomed, as an imitator of God, to unite certain truths with his falsehoods, that he may thus the more easily deceive men. Therefore, those things which the various Sects have in common with the teachings of the church are not to be opposed, because they have borrowed them from us; but those things which are in opposition to the doctrine of the church may easily be refuted, since they are nothing more than the inventions of men.

8. The *malignity* of satan, and his various emissaries, against the doctrine of the church is an evidence of its truth: for most assuredly that religion is true and from God, which the devil and wicked men, with one mind and purpose, despise and endeavor to destroy. Truth generally calls forth opposition from the wicked, and the devil, we are told, was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth. Now, it is manifestly true that the world and satan do not hate and impugn any other doctrine so violently as that of the church, which results from this, that it reproves them more sharply, calls their errors in question, exposes their fallacies and frauds, and more severely condemns all their idols and vices, than the various Sects which connive at these things, and even, in many instances,

defend them. "The world hateth me because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil." "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, therefore it hateth you." (John 7. 7: 15. 19.)

9. The *wonderful protection* and preservation of this doctrine, notwithstanding the malice and rage of Satan and other enemies, is a proof of its truth; for, since no other religion has been so fiercely and constantly assailed by tyrants and heretics as that of the church, which God has, notwithstanding, wonderfully protected against the rage of its enemies and the gates of hell, so that it alone remains to the present time, to the astonishment of the world, whilst other religions, in the meanwhile, have degenerated and disappeared from the earth, with little or no opposition; we may, therefore, safely conclude that the doctrine of the church is approved of and cared for on the part of God, or else he would never have extended to it the protection which he has.

10. The punishments and various judgments which God has, at different times, inflicted upon the enemies of the church, declare the divine character of her teachings; for that religion is doubtless from God, against which no one can array himself with impunity, which may be said to be true, as all history testifies, of that system of religion delivered in the writings of the prophets and apostles. And, although the wicked may often prosper in the world, and the church seem to be trodden under foot, yet, this does not come to pass, as the final issue of these events abundantly testifies, and as the Scriptures everywhere teach, by mere chance, or because God has greater pleasure in the wicked than in the church; for the church is always preserved, even amidst the greatest persecutions, and at length obtains deliverance from her most violent opposers, whilst, on the other hand, the short season of prosperity and triumph of cruel tyrants and wicked men is followed by a most awful destruction. Nor is the force of this argument weakened because all the persecutors of the church are not, in this life, punished in the same tragical manner, as Antiochus, Herod, and others; for whilst God, for the most part, avenges himself upon his enemies in this life, he declares plainly enough, by these judgments, what he will have us think of others of a similar character who are not thus severely punished, viz: that he regards them as his enemies, and will cast them into everlasting punishment unless they repent and seek his favor.

11. The *testimony and constancy of martyrs* who testified in the midst of the most excrutiating pains that they did truly believe as they taught, that they were most firmly persuaded in their hearts of the truth of the doctrine which they professed, and that they drew from it that comfort which they had preached unto others, that they were indeed the sons of God for the sake of Christ, and that God had a care for them, even in the midst of death, may be regarded as an evidence of the truth of the christian religion; because God, by sustaining and supporting them with the precious consolations of the gospel, declared that he approved of the doctrines on account of which they were thus called to suffer.

12. The piety and holiness of those who wrote the Holy Scriptures, and professed the doctrine contained therein, is a strong confirmation of its truth; for that religion which makes men holy and acceptable to God must itself necessarily be holy and divine. Now, as the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and others who have, as well as those who now sincerely embrace

and believe this doctrine, greatly excel the adherents of other religions in virtue and practical piety, as every one may most clearly see who will but make a proper comparison, we may reasonably conclude that the teachings of the church have stronger and more satisfactory evidences of truth and certainty than those of any other system of religion that has ever been devised.

13. The candor and honesty which those whom the Holy Spirit employed in committing this doctrine to writing, in speaking of and condemning their own faults, as well as those of others, may be urged as an argument in favor of the truth of what they wrote.

Lastly, we may mention in confirmation of the truth of this doctrine, the testimony of the Holy Ghost, by whose inspiration the Scriptures were given. By this testimony we mean a strong and lively faith, and a firm persuasion, wrought in the hearts of the faithful by the Holy Spirit, that the Scriptures are the word of God, and that God will be gracious to us according to what is affirmed in the Scriptures, which faith is followed by love to God and a calling upon his name with an assured hope of obtaining every thing that is necessary for our comfort here and in the world to come, everlasting life. This assurance and abiding consolation of the godly does not rest upon the testimony of man, nor of any other creature, but upon that of God, and is the proper effect of the Holy Spirit. As such it is experienced by all those who truly believe, in whom it is also strengthened and confirmed by the same Spirit, through the reading, hearing, and study of the doctrine delivered by the prophets and apostles. Hence, it is chiefly by the testimony of the Holy Ghost that all those who are converted to Christ are confirmed in the truth of this heavenly doctrine, and have it sealed upon their hearts. This argument being also applicable to the unregenerate, does not only convince their consciences of the truth and authority of the holy Scriptures, but it also moves and inclines their hearts to assent to this doctrine and to receive it as the truth of God. This argument, therefore, is the most important of all those which we have advanced; for, unless those which precede this be accompanied with the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit, they only convince the conscience and stop the mouths of gainsayers, but do not move or incline the heart.

V. What are the various methods of teaching and learning the Doctrine of the Church?

The method of teaching and studying Theology is three-fold. The *first* is the system of catechetical instruction, or that method which comprises a brief summary and simple exposition of the principal doctrines of the christian religion, which is called catechising. This method is of the greatest importance to all, because it is equally necessary for all, the learned as well as the unlearned, to know what constitutes the foundation of true religion.

The *second method* is the consideration and discussion of subjects of a general and more difficult character, or the Common Places, as they are called, which contain a more lengthy explanation of every single point, and of difficult questions with their definitions, divisions, and arguments. This method belongs more appropriately to theological schools, and is necessary: *First*, that those who are educated in these schools, and who may afterwards be called to teach in the church, may more easily and fully understand

the whole system of theology; for, as it is in other things, so it is also in the study of Divinity, our knowledge of it is obtained slowly and with great difficulty; yea, our knowledge of it must necessarily remain confused and imperfect unless every separate part of this doctrine be taught in some systematic form, so as to be perceived and understood by the mind. *Secondly*, that those who are students of theology may, when they are called to act as teachers in the church, be able to present clearly and systematically the substance of the entire doctrine of God's word. To do this it is necessary that they themselves should first have a complete system, or frame-work, as it were, of this doctrine in their own mind. *Thirdly*, it is necessary, for the purpose of discovering and determining the true and natural interpretation of the Scriptures, which requires a clear and full knowledge of every part of the doctrine of the church, in order that this interpretation may be in accordance with the analogy of faith, so that the Scriptures may be made to harmonize throughout. *Lastly*, it is necessary for the purpose of enabling us to form a proper decision in regard to the controversies of the church, which are various, difficult, and dangerous, lest we be drawn from the truth into error and falsehood.

The *third method* of the study of theology is the careful and diligent reading of the Scriptures or sacred text. This is the highest method in the study of the doctrine of the church. To attain this, the two former methods are to be studied, that we may be well prepared for the reading, understanding, and exposition of the holy Scriptures. For as the doctrine of the catechism and Common Places are taken out of the Scriptures, and are directed by them as their rule, so they again lead us, as it were, by the hand to the Scriptures. The catechism of which we shall speak in these lectures, belongs to the first method of the study of theology.

SPECIAL PROLEGOMENA

WITH REFERENCE TO THE CATECHISM.

THE SPECIAL PROLEGOMENA with reference to catechising, are five:

I. *What is catechising, or the system of catechisation?*
II. *Has it always been practiced in the church, or what is its origin?*
III. *What are the principal parts thereof?*
IV. *Why is it necessary?*
V. *What is its design?*

I. WHAT IS CATECHISATION?

The Greek word κατηχησις is derived from κατηχεω, as κατηχισμος is from κατηχιζω. Both words, according to their common signification, mean to sound, to resound, to instruct by word of mouth, and to repeat the sayings of another. Κατηχεω more properly, however, signifies to teach

the first principles and rudiments of some particular doctrine. As applied to the doctrine of the church, and as understood when thus used, it means to teach the first principles of the christian religion, in which sense it occurs in Luke 1. 4. Acts 18. 25. Gal. 6. 6, &c. Hence, catechisation in its most general and comprehensive sense, means the first brief and elementary instruction which is given by word of mouth in relation to the rudiments of any particular doctrine; but, as used by the church, it signifies a system of instruction relating to the first principles of the christian religion, designed for the ignorant and unlearned.

The system of catechising, therefore, includes a short, simple, and plain exposition and rehearsal of the christian doctrine, deduced from the writings of the prophets and apostles, and arranged in the form of questions and answers, adapted to the capacity and comprehension of the ignorant and unlearned; or it is a brief summary of the doctrine of the prophets and apostles, communicated orally to such as are unlearned, which they again are required to repeat.

In the primitive church, those who learned the catechism were called *Catechumens*; by which it was meant that they were already in the church, and were instructed in the first principles of the christian religion. There were two classes of these Catechumens. The *first* were those of adult age, who were converts to christianity from the Jews and Gentiles, but were not as yet baptized. Persons of this description were first instructed in the catechism, after which they were baptized and admitted to the Lord's Supper. Such a catechumen was Augustin after his conversion to Christianity from Manicheism, and wrote many books while he was a Catechumen, and before he was baptized by Ambrose. Ambrose was also a Catechumen of this sort when he was chosen Bishop, the urgent necessity of which arose from the peculiar state and condition of the church of Milan, upon which the Arians were making inroads. Under other and ordinary circumstances the apostle Paul forbids a *novice* or Catechumen to be chosen to the office of a Bishop. (1 Tim. 3. 6.) The νεόφυτοι, spoken of by Paul, were those Catechumens who were not yet, or very lately had been baptized; for the Greek word, which in our translation is rendered a *novice*, according to its literal signification means a new plant; that is, a new hearer and disciple of the church. *The other class of Catechumens* included the small children of the church, or the children of christian parents. These children, very soon after their birth, were baptized, being regarded as members of the church, and after they had grown a little older they were instructed in the catechism, which having learned, they were confirmed by the laying on of hands and were dismissed from the class of Catechumens, and were then permitted, with those of riper years, to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Those who are desirous of seeing more in regard to these Catechumens, are referred to the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius, the tenth book, and latter part of the fourth chapter. Those who taught the catechism, or instructed these Catechumens, were called *Catechists*.

II. What is the origin of Catechisation, and has it always been practiced in the Church?

The same thing may be said of the origin of catechisation which is said of the whole economy or service of the church, that it was instituted by God himself, and has always been practiced in the church. For, since

from the very beginning of the world God has been the God, not only of those of adult age, but also of those of young and tender years, according to the covenant which he made with Abraham, saying, "I will be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee;" (Gen. 17. 7.) he has also ordained that both classes should be instructed in the doctrine of salvation according to their capacity; the adults by the public voice of the ministry, and the children by being catechised in the family and school. As it respects the institution designed for the instruction of adults, the case is clear and admits of no doubt.

Touching the catechisation of children in the Jewish church, the Old Testament abounds in many explicit commands. In the 12th and 13th chapters of Exodus, God commands the Jews to give particular instruction to their children and families in relation to the institution and benefits of the Passover. In the fourth chapter of the book of Deut., he enjoins it upon parents to repeat to their children the entire history of the law which he had given them. In the sixth chapter of the same book, he requires that the doctrine of the unity of God, and of perfect love to him should be inculcated and impressed upon the minds of their children; and in the eleventh he commands them to explain the Decalogue to their children. Hence, under the Old Testament dispensation, children were taught in the family by their parents, and in the schools by the teachers of religion, the principal things contained in the prophets, viz: such as respects God, the law, the promise of the gospel, the use of the sacraments, and sacrifices, which were types of the Messiah that was to come, and of the benefits which he was to purchase; for there can be no doubt but that the schools of the prophets Elijah, Elisha, &c., were established for this very purpose. It was also with this design that God delivered his law in the short and condensed form in which it is. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," &c., "and thy neighbor as thyself." So also as it respects the gospel; it was briefly comprehended in the promises, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" "And in thy seed shall all the nations be blessed." They had, likewise, sacrifices, prayers, and other things which God required Abraham and his posterity to teach their children and families. Hence it is that this doctrine is presented in such a plain and simple form as to meet the capacity of children and such as are unlearned.

In the New Testament we are told that Christ laid his hands upon little children and blessed them, and commanded that they should be brought unto him. Hence he says, in Mark 10. 14, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." That the catechisation of children was diligently attended to in the times of the apostles, is evident from the example of Timothy, of whom it is said that he knew the holy Scriptures from a little child; and from what is said in the epistle to the Hebrews, where mention is made of some of the principal heads included in the catechism of the apostles, such as repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptism, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection from the dead, and of eternal judgment, which the apostle terms milk for babes. These and similar points of doctrine were required from the Catechumens of adult age at the time of their baptism, and of children at the time of their confirmation by the laying on of hands. Hence, the apostle calls them the doctrine of

baptism and laying on of hands. So likewise the Fathers wrote short summaries of doctrine, some fragments of which may still be seen in the Papal church. Eusebius writes of Origen, that he restored the custom of catechising in Alexandria, which had been suffered to grow out of use during the times of persecution. Socrates writes thus in relation to the system of catechising in the primitive church: "*Our form of catechising*," says he, "*is in accordance with the mode which we have received from the Bishops who have preceded us, and according as we were taught when we laid the foundation of faith and were baptized, and according as we have learned from the Scriptures*," &c. Pope Gregory caused images and idols to be placed in the churches, that they might serve as books for the laity and children. After this period the doctrine of the church, through the negligence of the bishops and the subtlety of the Romish priests, became gradually more and more corrupt, and the custom of catechising grew more and more into disuse, until at length it was changed into the ridiculous ceremony which to this day they call confirmation. So much concerning the origin and practice of catechisation in the church.

III. What are the parts or principal heads of the Doctrine of the Catechism?

The chief and most important parts of the first principles of the doctrine of the church, as appears from the passage just quoted from the Epistle to the Hebrews, are repentance and faith in Christ, which we may regard as synonymous with the law and gospel. Hence, the catechism in its primary and most general sense, may be divided as the doctrine of the church, *into the law and gospel*. It does not differ from the doctrine of the church as it respects the subject and matter of which it treats, but only in the form and manner in which these things are presented, just as strong meat designed for adults, to which the doctrine of the church may be compared, does not differ in essence from the milk and meat prepared for children, to which the catechism is compared by Paul in the passage already referred to. These two parts are termed, by the great mass of men, the Decalogue and the Apostles' creed; because the Decalogue comprehends the substance of the law, and the Apostles' creed that of the gospel. Another distinction made by this same class of persons is that of the doctrine of faith and works, or the doctrine of those things which are to be believed and those which are to be done.

There are others who divide the catechism into these three parts; considering, in the first place, the doctrine respecting God, then the doctrine respecting his will, and lastly that respecting his works, which they distinguish as the works of creation, preservation, and redemption. But all these different parts are treated of either in the law or the gospel, or in both, so that this division may easily be reduced to the former.

There are others, again, who make the catechism consist of five different parts; the Decalogue, the Apostles' Creed, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Prayer; of which, the Decalogue was delivered immediately by God himself, whilst the other parts were delivered mediately, either through the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh, as is true of the Lord's Prayer, Baptism, and the Eucharist, or through the ministry of the apostles, as is true of the Apostles' Creed. But all these different parts may also be

reduced to the two general heads noticed in the first division. The Decalogue contains the substance of the law, the Apostles' Creed that of the gospel; the sacraments are parts of the gospel, and may, therefore, be embraced in it as far as they are seals of the grace which it promises, but as far as they are testimonies of our obedience to God, they have the nature of sacrifices and pertain to the law, whilst prayer, in like manner, may be referred to the law, being a part of the worship of God.

The catechism of which we shall speak in these lectures consists of three parts. The first treats of the misery of man, the second of his deliverance from this misery, and the third of gratitude, which division does not, in reality, differ from the above, because all the parts which are there specified are embraced in these three general heads. The Decalogue belongs to the first part, in as far as it is the mirror through which we are brought to see ourselves, and thus led to a knowledge of our sins and misery, and to the third part in as far as it is the rule of true thankfulness and of a christian life. The Apostles' Creed is embraced in the second part inasmuch as it unfolds the way of deliverence from sins. The sacraments, belonging to the doctrine of faith and being the seals that are attached thereto, belong in like manner to this second part of the catechism, which treats of deliverance from the misery of man. And prayer, being the chief part of spiritual worship and of thankfulness, may, with great propriety, be referred to the third general part.

IV. Why is it necessary to introduce and teach the Catechism in the Church?

This necessity may be urged,

1. Because it is the command of God: "Ye shall teach them to your children," &c. (Deut. 11. 19.)

2. Because of the divine glory which demands that God be not only rightly known and worshipped by those of adult age, but also by children, according as it is said, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." (Ps. 8. 2.)

3. On account of our comfort and salvation; for without a true knowledge of God and his Son Jesus Christ, no one that has attained to years of discretion and understanding can be saved, or have any sure comfort that he is accepted in the sight of God. Hence it is said, "This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." And again, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (John 17. 3. Heb. 11. 6.) And not only so, but no one believes on him of whom he knows nothing, or has not heard; for, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10. 14, 17.) It is necessary, therefore, for all those who will be saved, to lay hold of, and embrace the doctrine of Christ, which is the chief and fundamental doctrine of the gospel. But, in order that this may be done, there must be instructions imparted to this effect, and of necessity, some brief and simple form of doctrine, suited and adapted to the young, and such as are unlearned.

4. For the preservation of society and the church. All past history proves that religion and the worship of God, the exercise and practice of

piety, honesty, justice, and truth, are of the greatest importance to the well-being and perpetuation of the church and of the commonwealth. But it is in vain that we look for these things among barbarous nations, since they have never been known to produce the fruits of piety and virtue. Hence, there is a necessity that we should be trained to the practice of these things from our earliest years; because the heart of man is depraved and evil from his youth; yea, such is the corruption of our nature, that unless we early commence the work of reformation and moral training, we too late apply a remedy when, through long delay, the evil principles and inclinations of the heart have become so strengthened and confirmed, as to bid defiance to the restraints we may then wish to impose upon them. If we are not correctly instructed in our childhood out of the sacred Scriptures concerning God and his will, and do not then commence the practice of piety, it is with great difficulty, if ever, we are drawn away from these errors which are, as it were, born in us, or which we have imbibed from our youth, and that we are led to abandon the vices in which we have been brought up, and to which we have been accustomed. If, therefore, the church and state are to be preserved from degeneracy and final destruction, it is of the utmost importance that this depravity of our nature should, in due time, be met with proper restraints, and be subdued.

5. There is a necessity that all persons should be made acquainted with the rule and standard according to which we are to judge and decide, in relation to the various opinions and dogmas of men, that we may not be led into error, and be seduced thereby, according to the commandment which is given in relation to this subject, "Beware of false prophets." "Prove all things." "Try the spirits whether they are of God." (Matt. 7. 15. 1 Thess. 5. 21. 1 John 4. 1.) But the law and the Apostle's creed, which are the chief parts of the catechism, constitute the rule and standard according to which we are to judge of the opinions of men, from which we may see the great importance of a familiar acquaintance with them.

6. Those who have properly studied and learned the Catechism, are generally better prepared to understand and appreciate the sermons which they hear from time to time, inasmuch as they can easily refer and reduce those things which they hear out of the word of God, to the different heads of the catechism to which they appropriately belong, whilst, on the other hand, those who have not enjoyed this preparatory training, hear sermons, for the most part, with but little profit to themselves.

7. The importance of catechisation may be urged in view of its peculiar adaptedness to those learners who are of weak and uncultivated minds, who require instruction in a short, plain, and perspicuous manner, as we have it in the catechism, and would not, on account of their youth and weakness of capacity, be able to understand it, if presented in a lengthy and more difficult form.

8. It is also necessary, for the purpose of distinguishing and separating the youths, and such as are unlearned, from schismatics and profane heathen, which can most effectually be done by a judicious course of catechetical instruction.

Lastly. A knowledge of the catechism is especially important for those who are to act as teachers, because they ought to have a more intimate acquaintance with the doctrine of the church than others, as well on account

of their calling, that they may one day be able to instruct others, as on account of the many facilities which they have for obtaining a knowledge of this doctrine, which it becomes them diligently to improve, that they may, like Timothy, become well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, and "be good ministers of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith, and of a good doctrine, whereunto they have attained." (1. Tim. 4, 6.)

To these considerations, which clearly show the importance of catechisation, we may add many others of great weight, especially with the great mass of mankind, such as the arguments which may be drawn from the end of our creation, and from the prolongation and preservation of our lives from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood, &c. We might also speak of the excellency of the object of the doctrine of the catechism, which is the highest good, even God himself, and might show the effect of such a course of instruction, which is a knowledge of this highest good, and a participation therein, which is something vastly more important and desirable than all the treasures of this world. This is that pearl of great price hidden in the field of the church, concerning which Christ speaks in Matt. 13, 44, and on account of which christians in former times suffered martyrdom, with their little children. We may here refer to the example of Origen, of which we have an account in the sixth book and third chapter of the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius. So the fourth book and sixteenth chapter of the history of Theodoret may be read to the same purpose. But if we are ignorant of the doctrine and glory of Christ, who from among us would be willing to suffer on their account? And how can it be otherwise but that we will be ignorant of these things, unless we are taught and instructed in them from our childhood? A neglect of the catechism is, therefore, one of the chief causes why there are so many at the present day tossed about by every wind of doctrine, and why so many fall from Christ to Anti-christ.

V. What is the Design of the Catechism, and of the Doctrine of the Church?

The design of the doctrine of the catechism is our comfort and salvation. Our salvation consists in the enjoyment of the highest good. Our comfort comprises the assurance and confident expectation of the full and perfect enjoyment of this highest good, in the life to come, with a beginning and foretaste of it already, in this life. This highest good is that which makes all those truly blessed who are in the enjoyment of it, whilst those who have it not are miserable and wretched. What this only comfort is, to which it is the design of the catechism to lead us, will be explained in the first question, to which we now proceed, without making any further introductory remarks.

THE

COMMENTARY OF URSINUS

UPON THE

HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.

FIRST LORD'S DAY.

Question 1. What is thy only comfort in life and death?

Answer. That I with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own, but belong unto my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ, who, with his precious blood, hath fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that, without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation: and therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me sincerely willing and ready henceforth to live unto him.

EXPOSITION.

The question of comfort is placed, and treated first, because it embodies the design and substance of the catechism. The design is, that we may be led to the attainment of sure and solid comfort, both in life and death. On this account, all divine truth has been revealed by God, and is especially to be studied by us. The substance of this comfort consists in this, that we are ingrafted into Christ by faith, that through him we are reconciled to, and beloved of God, that thus he may care for and save us eternally.

Concerning this comfort, we must enquire:

I. *What is it?*
II. *In how many parts does it consist?*
III. *Why is it alone solid and sure?*
IV. *Why is it necessary?*
V. *How many things are necessary for its attainment?*

I. What is Comfort?

Comfort is that which results from a certain process of reasoning, in which we oppose something good to something evil, that by a proper consideration of this good, we may mitigate our grief, and patiently endure

the evil. The good therefore, which we oppose to the evil, must necessarily be great, and certain, in proportion to the magnitude of the evil with which it is contrasted. And as consolation is here to be sought against the greatest evil, which is sin, and eternal death, it is not possible that any thing short of the highest good, can be a sufficient remedy for it. Without the word of God, however, to direct and reveal the truth, there are almost as many opinions entertained as to what this highest good is, as there are men. The Epicureans place it in sensual pleasure; the Stoics in a proper regulation and moderation of the affections, or in the habit of virtue; the Platonists in ideas; the Peripatetics in the exercise of virtue; whilst the ordinary class of men place it in honors, riches, and pleasure. But all these things are transitory, and are either lost already in life, or they are at best interrupted and left behind in the hour of death. But the highest good after which we seek never fades away — no, not in death. It is true, indeed, that the honor of virtue is immortal, and, as the Poet says, *survives men's funerals;* but it is rather with others than with ourselves. And it has well been said by a certain one, that *virtues cannot be considered the highest good, since we have them witnesses of our calamities.* Hypocrites, both within and without the church, as Jews, Pharisees and Mahommetans, seek a remedy against death in their own merits, in outward forms and ceremonies. The Papists do the same thing. But mere external rites can neither cleanse nor quiet the consciences of men; nor will God be mocked with such offerings.

Therefore, although philosophy, and all the various sects, enquire after and promise such a good as that which affords solid comfort to man, both in life and death, yet they neither have, nor can bestow, that which is necessary to meet the demands of our moral nature. It is only the doctrine of the church that presents such a good, and that imparts a comfort that quiets, and satisfies the conscience; for it alone uncovers the fountain of all the miseries to which the human race is subject, and reveals the only way of escape through Christ. This, therefore, is that christian comfort, spoken of in this question of the catechism, which is an only and solid comfort, both in life and death — a comfort consisting in the assurance of the free remission of sin, and of reconciliation with God, by and on account of Christ, and a certain expectation of eternal life, impressed upon the heart by the holy Spirit through the gospel, so that we have no doubt but that we are the property of Christ, and are beloved of God for his sake, and saved forever, according to the declaration of the Apostle Paul: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress," &c. (Rom. 8. 35.)

II. Of how many Parts does this Comfort consist?

This comfort consists of six parts:

1. *Our reconciliation* with God through Christ, so that we are no longer the enemies, but the sons of God; neither are we our own, but we belong to Christ. (1. Cor. 7. 23.)

2. *The manner* of our reconciliation with God through the blood of Christ, that is, through his passion, death, and satisfaction for our sins. (1. Peter 1. 18. 1. John 1. 7.)

3. *Deliverance* from the miseries of sin and death. Christ does not only reconcile us to God, but he also delivers us from the power of the devil; so that sin, death, and satan have no power over us. (Heb. 2. 14. 1. John 3. 8.)

4. *The constant preservation* of our reconciliation, deliverance, and whatever other benefits Christ has once purchased for us. We are his property; therefore, he watches over us as his own, so that not so much as a hair can fall from our heads without the will of our heavenly Father. Our safety does not lie in our own hands, or strength; for if it did, we should lose it a thousand times every moment.

5. *The turning* of all our evils into good. The righteous are, indeed, afflicted in this life, yea they are put to death, and are as sheep for the slaughter; yet these things do not injure them, but rather contribute to their salvation, because God turns all things to their advantage, as it is said: "All things work together for good to them that love God." (Rom. 8. 27.)

6. Our full persuasion and assurance of all these great benefits, and of eternal life. This assurance is obtained, in the first place, from the testimony of the Holy Spirit working in us true faith, and conversion, bearing witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God, and that these blessings truly pertain to us; because "he is the earnest of our inheritance;" and secondly, from the effects of true faith, which we perceive to be in us; such as true penitence, and a firm purpose to believe God and obey all his commandments; for we are assured of having true faith when we have an earnest desire of obeying God; and by faith we are persuaded of the love of God and eternal salvation. This is the foundation of all the other parts of this consolation which we have specified, and without which every other comfort is transient and unsatisfying amid the temptations of life. The substance of our comfort therefore is briefly this:— That we are Christ's, and through him reconciled to the Father, that we may be beloved of him and saved, the Holy Ghost and eternal life being given unto us.

III. Why is this Comfort alone Solid?

That this comfort alone is solid, is evident, first, because it alone never fails — no, not in death; for "whether we live, or die, we are the Lord's;" and "who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 14. 8; 8. 35.) And, secondly, because it alone remains unshaken, and sustains us under all the temptations of satan, who often thus assails the christian:

1. Thou art a sinner. To this, comfort replies — Christ has satisfied for my sins, and redeemed me with his own precious blood, so that I am no longer my own, but belong to him.

2. But thou art a child of wrath and an enemy of God. Answer — I am, indeed, such by nature, and before my reconciliation; but I have been reconciled to God, and received into his favor through Christ.

3. But thou shalt surely die. Ans. Christ has redeemed me from the power of death, and I know that through him I shall come forth from death unto eternal life.

4. But many evils, in the mean time, befall the righteous. Ans. But our Lord defends and preserves us under them, and makes them work together for our good.

5. But what if thou fall from the grace of Christ? For thou mayest sin, and faint, for it is a long and difficult road to Heaven. Ans. Christ has not only merited and conferred his benefits upon me, but he also continually preserves me in them, and grants me perseverance, that I may neither faint nor fall from his grace.

6. But what if his grace does not extend to thee, and thou art not of the number of those who are the Lord's? Ans. But I know that grace does extend to me, and that I am Christ's; because the Holy Spirit bears witness with my spirit that I am a child of God; and because I have true faith, for the promise is general, extending to all them that believe.

7. But what if thou hast not true faith? Ans. I know that I have true faith from the effects thereof; because I have a conscience at peace with God, and an earnest desire and will to believe and obey the Lord.

8. But thy faith is weak, and thy conversion imperfect. Ans. Yet it is nevertheless true and unfeigned, and I have the blessed assurance that "to him that hath shall be given." "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." (Luke 19. 26. Mark 9. 24.)

In this most severe and dangerous conflict, which all the children of God experience, christian consolation remains immoveable, and at length concludes: therefore Christ, with all his benefits, pertains even to me.

IV. Why is this Comfort Necessary?

From what has been said, it is clearly manifest that this comfort is necessary for us; First, *on account of our salvation*, that we may neither faint nor despair under our temptations, and the conflict in which we are all called to engage, as christians. And secondly, it is necessary *on account of praising and worshipping God;* for if we would glorify God in this, and in a future life, (for which we were created,) we must be delivered from sin and death; and not rush into desperation, but be sustained, even to the end, with sure consolation.

V. How many things are necessary for the Attainment of this Comfort?

This proposition is considered in the following question of the catechism, to which we refer the reader.

Question 2. How many things are necessary for thee to know, that thou, enjoying this comfort, mayest live and die happy?

Answer. Three; the first, how great my sins and miseries are; the second, how I may be delivered from all my sins and miseries; the third, how I shall express my gratitude to God for such deliverance.

EXPOSITION.

This question contains the statement and division of the whole catechism and at the same time accords with the division of the Scriptures into the Law and Gospel, and with the differences of these parts, as they have already been explained.

I. A knowledge of our misery is necessary for our comfort, not that it of itself administers any consolation, or is any part of it, (for of itself it rather alarms than comforts,) but it is necessary:

First, because it excites in us the desire of deliverance, just as a knowledge of disease awakens a desire of medicine on the part of the sick. Where there is no knowledge of our misery, there is no deliverance sought, just as the man who is ignorant of his disease never inquires after the physician. Now if we do not desire deliverance, we do not seek it; and if we do not seek it we will never obtain it, because God gives it only to those who seek, and knock, as it is said — "To him that knocketh, it shall be opened." "Ask, and it shall be given unto you." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden." "I dwell with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit." (Matt. 7. 6; 5. 6; 11. 28. Isaiah 57. 15.) That now which is necessary for the purpose of exciting in us a desire of deliverance, is also necessary for our comfort. But a knowledge of our misery is necessary for the purpose of creating in us the desire of deliverance. Therefore it is necessary for our consolation; not, indeed, as being in its own nature the cause, but as a motive, without which we would not seek it; for in itself it terrifies, yet this terror is advantageous when it leads to the exercise of faith.

Secondly, that we may be thankful to God for our deliverance. We should be ungrateful if we did not know the greatness of the evil, from which we have been delivered; because, in this case, we could not correctly estimate the magnitude of the blessing, and so would not obtain deliverance, since this is granted only to such as are thankful.

Thirdly, because without the knowledge of our sinfulness and misery, we cannot hear the gospel with profit; for unless, by the preaching of the law as touching sin and the wrath of God, a preparation be made for the proclamation of grace, a carnal security follows, and our comfort becomes unstable. Sure consolation cannot stand in connection with carnal security. Hence it is manifest that we must commence with the preaching of the law, after the example of the Prophets and Apostles, that men may thus be cast down from the conceit of their own righteousness, and may obtain a knowledge of themselves, and be led to true repentance. Unless this be done, men will become, through the preaching of grace, more careless and obstinate, and pearls will be cast before swine to be trodden under foot.

II. A knowledge of our deliverance is necessary for our comfort:

First, that we may not despair. A knowledge of our misery would lead us to despair, did not a way of deliverance present itself to us.

Secondly, that we may desire this deliverance. An unknown good is not desired; because what we have no knowledge of, we cannot desire. If we be ignorant, therefore, of the benefit of our deliverance, we will not long after it, and of course will not obtain it. Yea, if it were even offered to us, or we were to fall upon it, we would not embrace it.

Thirdly, that it may comfort us. A good that is not known, cannot impart any comfort.

Fourthly, that we may not devise another method of deliverance, or embrace one invented by others, and thereby cast a reproach upon the name of God, and endanger our salvation.

Fifthly, that we may receive it by faith; but faith cannot be without knowledge. Deliverance is also obtained by faith alone.

Lastly, that we may be thankful to God; for as we do not desire an unknown good, so we neither appreciate nor feel thankful for it. But the benefit of deliverance is not given to the ungrateful. God is pleased to confer it only upon those in whom it produces its proper effect, which is gratitude. For these reasons, a knowledge of our deliverance, what it is, in what manner and by whom it is effected, and bestowed, &c., is necessarily required, that we may enjoy true and solid comfort. This knowledge is obtained from the gospel, as heard, read, and apprehended by faith; because it alone promises deliverance to those that believe in Christ.

III. A knowledge of gratitude is necessary to our comfort:

First, because God is pleased to grant deliverance only to the thankful. It is only in such that his purpose is realized, which is his glory and gratitude on our part. Gratitude is, therefore, the principal end, and design of our deliverance. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." "He hath adopted us to the praise of the glory of his grace." (1 John 3. 8. Eph. 1. 4.)

Secondly, that we may return such gratitude as is acceptable to God, who will not have us to be grateful under any other form than that which he has prescribed in his word. True gratitude is, therefore, not to be rendered according to our own notion, but is to be learned from the Word of God.

Thirdly, that we may know that whatever duties we perform towards God and our neighbor, are not meritorious, but are a declaration of our thankfulness; for that which we do from gratitude, we acknowledge we have not deserved.

Lastly, that our faith and comfort may be increased; or, that by this gratitude, we may assure ourselves of our deliverance, as we are made acquainted with the causes of things from their effects. Those who are grateful, acknowledge and profess that they are certain of the good which they have received. We may learn what true gratitude is, in general, from the gospel, because it requires faith and repentance in order that we may be saved, as it is said, "Repent, and believe the gospel, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Mark 1. 15.) In the law, however, it is taught particularly, because it distinctly declares what works, and what manner of obedience is pleasing to God. We must, therefore, necessarily treat of thankfulness in the catechism.

Objection. It is not necessary to teach that which follows of its own accord. Gratitude naturally follows a knowledge of our misery and deliverance. Therefore there is no necessity that it should be taught.

Answer. There is here an incorrect course of reasoning, in supposing that to be true generally, which is so only in part; for it is not a just inference that because gratitude follows a knowledge of our deliverance from misery, that the manner of it must also necessarily follow. We are, therefore, to learn from the Holy Scriptures, the nature of true gratitude, and the manner in which it should be expressed, so as to be pleasing and acceptable to God. Again; the major proposition is not universally true; for that also which follows of its own accord, may be taught for the purpose of increasing our knowledge and confirming us therein. And it is in this way, that is, through the revelation and knowledge of his Word, that God awakens, increases, and confirms in us, true gratitude.

SECOND LORD'S DAY.

THE FIRST GENERAL DIVISION OF THE CATECHISM.

CONCERNING THE MISERY OF MAN.

Question 3. Whence knowest thou thy misery?

Answer. Out of the law of God.

EXPOSITION.

In this division of the catechism which treats of the misery of man, we are to consider principally the subject of sin, together with the effects or punishment of sin. Other subjects of a subordinate nature are connected with this, such as the creation of man, the image of God in man, the fall and first sin of man, original sin, the liberty of the will, and afflictions. In regard to our misery, we must consider in general, what it is, whence, and how it may be known!

The term misery is more comprehensive in its signification than that of sin, for it embraces the evil both of guilt and punishment. The evil of guilt is all sin; the evil of punishment is all affliction, torment, and destruction of our rational nature, as well as all subsequent sins also, by which those are punished that go before; as the numbering of the children of Israel, for instance, by David, was a sin, and at the same time the punishment of a preceding sin, viz: that of adultery and murder, with which he was chargeable, so that it included the evil both of guilt and punishment. The misery of man, therefore, is his wretched condition since the fall, consisting of these two great evils: First, that human nature is depraved, sinful, and alienated from God, and secondly, that, on account of this depravity, mankind are exposed to eternal condemnation, and deserve to be rejected of God.

The knowledge of this our misery is derived out of the law of God; for, "through the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3. 20.) The language of the law is, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of the law, to do them." (Deut. 27. 26.) The two following questions of the catechism teach us how the law makes us acquainted with our misery.

Question 4. What doth the law of God require of us?

Answer. Christ teacheth us that briefly, (Matt. 22. 37, 40.) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first and the great command; and the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commands hang the whole law and the prophets."

EXPOSITION.

Christ rehearses the substance of the law in Matt. 22. 37, and in Luke 10. 27, from Deut. 6. 5, and Levit. 19. 8. He explains what is meant by that declaration: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them;" that is, he who does not love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength, and his neighbor as himself. These several parts must be explained more fully.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. To love God with the whole heart, is, upon a due acknowledgment of his infinite goodness, reverently to regard and esteem him as our highest good, to love him supremely, to rejoice and trust in him alone, and to prefer his glory to all other things, so that there may not be in us the least thought, inclination, or desire for anything that might be displeasing to him; yea, rather to be willing to suffer the loss of all things that may be dear to us, or to endure the heaviest calamity, than that we should be separated from communion with him, or offend him in the smallest matter, and lastly, to direct all this to the end that he alone may be glorified by us.

The Lord thy God. As if he would say, thou shalt love that God who is thy Lord and thy God, who has revealed himself unto thee, who confers his benefits upon thee, and to whose service thou art bound. There is here an opposition of the true God to false gods.

With all thy heart. By the heart we are to understand the affections, desires, and inclinations. When God, therefore, requires our whole heart, he desires that he alone should be loved above everything else; that our whole heart should be stayed on him, and not that a part should be given to him and a part to another. In short, he wills that we make nothing equal to him, much less that we should prefer any thing to him; or that we should be willing to share only a part of his love. To love God thus, is what the Scripture calls "walking before God with a perfect heart;" the opposite of which is not to walk before God with a perfect heart, which is to halt, and not to surrender the whole person to him.

Obj. God alone is to be loved. Therefore, our neighbors, parents and kindred are not to be loved. Ans. This argument is false, because it proceeds from a denial of the manner, to that of the thing itself. God alone is to be loved supremely, and above every thing else; that is, in such a manner that there may be nothing at all which we either prefer or put upon an equality with him, and which we are not heartily willing to part with for his sake. But we ought to love our neighbors, parents, and others, not supremely, nor above every thing else, nor in such a manner that we would rather offend God than our parents; but in subordination to and on account of God, and not above him.

With all thy soul. The soul signifies that part of our being which wills, together with the exercise of the will, as if he would say, thou shalt love with thy whole will and purpose.

With all thy mind. The mind signifies the understanding, or that which perceives; as if he would say, as much as thou knowest of God, so much shalt thou love him — thou shalt bend all thy thoughts that thou mayest know God truly and perfectly, and so shalt thou also love him. We can love God only as far as we know him. We now love him imperfectly, because we know him only in part. But in the life to come we shall know him perfectly, and shall, therefore, love him perfectly; for "that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Cor. 13. 10.)

With all thy strength. This embraces all actions, and exercises, at the same time, both external and internal; that they may be in accordance with the law of God.

This is the first and greatest commandment. The love of God is called the *first* commandment, because all the others proceed from this, as their source. It is the impelling, the efficient, and final cause of obedience to all

the other commandments of God. For we love our neighbor because we love God, and that we may manifest our love to God in the love which we cherish towards our neighbor. It is called the *greatest* commandment 1. Because the object upon which it is immediately directed is the greatest, even God himself. 2. Because it is the end to which all the other commandments look; for our entire obedience is designed to show forth our love to God, and to honor his name. 3. Because it is the principal worship of God, which the ceremonial law subserved, and to which it gave place. The Pharisees extolled the ceremonial law and worship above the moral; whilst Christ, on the other hand, calls love the greatest commandment, and gives precedence to the moral law and worship, because whatever was instituted under the ceremonial system was on account of love, and was designed to give place to it.

Obj. The love of God is the greatest commandment. Therefore it is greater than faith, and hence justifies rather than faith. Ans. Love is here to be understood as including the entire obedience which we owe to God, in which faith is included, which justifies, not of itself as a virtue, but correlatively, as it apprehends and appropriates the merits of Christ. But the love which is opposed to faith, and which in particular is so called, does not justify, because the application of the righteousness of Christ is not made by love, but by faith alone; yea, love springs from faith; for faith is the cause of all the other virtues.

The second is like to this: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. To love thy neighbor as thyself, is in view of thy love to God; or because thou lovest God, do well unto thy neighbor according to all the commandments of the Lord; or will and do to thy neighbor those things which thou wilt that he should do to thee. Now every man is our neighbor.

It is called the *second commandment*: 1. Because it embodies the substance of the second table, or those duties which are performed directly towards our neighbor. If thou love thy neighbor as thyself, thou wilt neither murder, nor injure him. 2. Because the love which we cherish towards our neighbor must arise out of the love of God; it is, therefore, naturally subsequent to it.

It is said to be *like unto the first* in three respects: 1. In the kind of worship which it requires, which is moral or spiritual. This is no less required and sanctioned in the second table than in the first, for it every where opposes itself to a mere formal worship. 2. In the kind of punishment which it threatens against the transgressor, which is an eternal punishment; for God inflicts this, as well for the violation of one table, as for that of the other. 3. In the connection which holds between the two tables; for neither one can be maintained without the other.

It is also *unlike the first*: 1. In the object which it immediately respects, which in the first is God, in the second our neighbor. 2. In the order of cause and effect. The love which we cherish towards our neighbor originates in the love which we have to God; but not the contrary. 3. In the degree of love. We must love God supremely. But the love which we have for our neighbor must not be above every thing else, nor stronger than that which we have for God; but only as we love ourselves.

From what has now been said, it is easy to return an answer to the objection sometimes made: The second commandment is like unto the first. Therefore the first is not the greatest; or, therefore our neighbor is

to be regarded as equal with God, and is to be worshipped in like manner. To this we reply, that the second is like unto the first, not absolutely, and in every point of view, but only in certain respects; and unlike it in the particulars already specified.

On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets; that is, the entire doctrine of the Law and the Prophets, is reduced to these two heads; and all obedience to the law, inculcated by Moses and the Prophets, arises from love to God and love to our neighbor. Obj. But there are also many promises of the Gospel in the Prophets. Therefore it would seem that the doctrine of the Prophets is not properly restricted to these two commandments. Ans. Christ speaks of the doctrine of the law, and not of the promises of the gospel, which is evident from the question of the Pharisee, who asked him which was the greatest commandment, and not, which was the principal promise in the law.

Question 5. **Canst thou keep all these things perfectly?**

Answer. **In no wise; for I am prone by nature to hate God and my neighbor.**

EXPOSITION.

This question, in connection with the preceding, teaches us that our misery, (of which there are two parts,) may be known out of the law in two ways. First, by a comparison of ourselves with the law; and second, by an application of the curse of the law to ourselves.

The comparing of ourselves with the law, or of the law with ourselves, is a consideration of that purity which the law requires, and whether it be in us. This comparison clearly proves that we are not what the law requires; for it demands perfect love to God, whilst there is nothing in us but aversion and hatred to him. The law, again, demands perfect love toward our neighbor; but in us there is enmity to our neighbor. It is in this manner, therefore, that we obtain a knowledge of the first part of our misery, which includes our depravity, of which the Scriptures in many places convict us. (Rom. 8. 7. Eph. 2. 3. Titus 3. 3, &c.)

The application of the curse of the law to ourselves is made by a practical syllogism, of which the major proposition is the voice of the law: *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.* Conscience supplies and affirms in us the minor proposition: *I have not continued in all things written, &c.* The conclusion is the approbation of the sentence of the law: *I am condemned.* Conscience dictates to every man such a syllogism as this; yea, it is nothing else than such a practical syllogism formed in the mind, whose major proposition is the law of God; the minor, is the knowledge of what we have done, contrary to the law; and the conclusion, is the approbation of the sentence of the law, condemning us on account of sin — which approbation will be followed by grief and despair, unless the consolation of the gospel is brought nigh unto us, and we obtain the remission of sins for the sake of the Son of God, our Mediator. It is in this way that we obtain a knowledge of our sinful state and exposure to eternal condemnation, which is the second part of our misery; for by this argument, all are

convinced of sin. The law binds all to obedience, and if this is not performed, to eternal punishment and condemnation. But no one renders this obedience. Therefore, the law binds all men to eternal condemnation.

THIRD LORD'S DAY.

Question 6. Did God then create man so wicked and perverse?

Answer. By no means; but God created man good, and after his own image, in righteousness and true holiness, that he might rightly know God, his Creator, heartily love him, and live with him in eternal happiness, to glorify him and praise him.

EXPOSITION.

Having established the proposition that human nature is depraved, or sinful, we must now enquire, did God create man thus? and if not, with what nature did he create him? and whence does this depravity of human nature proceed? The subject of the creation of man, therefore, and of the image of God in man, belongs properly to this place.

It is also proper that we should here contrast the misery of man with his original excellence: first, that the cause and origin of our misery being known, we may not impute it unto God; and secondly, that the greatness of our misery may be the more clearly seen. In proportion as this is done, will the original excellency of man become apparent; just as the benefit of deliverance becomes the more precious in the same proportion in which we are brought to apprehend the magnitude of the evil from which we have been rescued.

OF THE CREATION OF MAN.

The questions to be discussed, in connection with the creation of man, are the following:

I. *What was the state or condition in which God originally created man?*
II. *For what end did he create him?*

I. What was the State in which God originally created Man?

This question is proposed almost for the same reasons for which the whole subject itself is considered, viz.: That it may be manifest, in the first place, that God created man without sin, and is therefore not the author of sin, or of our corruption and misery. 2. That we may see from what a height of dignity, to what a depth of misery we have fallen by sin, that we may thus acknowledge the mercy of God, who has deigned to extricate and deliver us from this wretchedness. 3. That we may acknowledge the greatness of the benefits which we have received, and our unworthiness of being made the recipients of such favors. 4. That we may the more earnestly desire, and seek in Christ, the recovery of that dignity and happiness which we have lost. 5. That we may be thankful to God for this restoration.

As touching the state and condition in which God originally created man, we are here taught, in the answer to this sixth question, that *God created man good, and in his own image, &c.*, which it is necessary for us to expound somewhat more largely.

Man was created by God on the sixth day of the creation of the world. His body was made of the dust of the ground, immortal if he continued in righteousness, but mortal if he fell; for mortality followed sin as a punishment. His soul was made out of nothing. It was immediately breathed into him by the Almighty. It was, therefore, rational, spiritual, and immortal. "And God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." (Gen. 2. 27.) He created, and united the soul and the body, so as to constitute, by this union, one person, performing such internal and external functions and actions as are peculiar to human nature, and which are just, holy, and pleasing to God. Man was also created in the image of God; by which we mean that he was created perfectly good, wise, just, holy, happy, and lord of all other creatures. Concerning this image of God, in which man was at first created, more will be said a little further on.

II. For what end did God create Man?

To this the catechism answers: "*That he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love him, and live with him in eternal happiness, to glorify and praise him.*" *The glory of God* is, therefore, the chief and ultimate end for which man was created. It was for this purpose that God created rational and intelligent beings, such as angels and men, that knowing him, they might praise him forever. Hence, man was created principally for the glory of God; that is, for professing and calling upon his holy name, for praise and thanksgiving, for love and obedience, which consists in a proper discharge of the duties which we owe to God and our fellowmen. For the glory of God comprehends all these things.

Obj. But the heavens, and earth, and other creatures are also said to glorify God. Therefore this was not the end for which man was created. Ans. When creatures destitute of reason are said to praise and glorify God it is not that they acknowledge or celebrate his praise, but because they furnish the matter and occasion of glorifying God, which belongs properly to intelligent creatures. Angels and men, by the contemplation of these works of God, discern his wisdom, goodness, and power, and are thus stirred up to magnify and praise his name. To glorify God, therefore, is the work of creatures possessed of reason and understanding, and if there were not beings of this description to discern the order and arrangement which is manifest in nature, unintelligent creation could no more be said to praise God than if it had no existence. Hence, we are to regard those declarations in the book of the Psalms, in which the heavens, sea, earth, &c., are said to praise God, as figurative expressions, in which the inspired writer attributes to things, void of reason, that which belongs properly to intelligent creatures.

2. There are other reasons for which man was created, subordinate to the glory of God. *His knowledge*, for instance, contributes to his glory, in as much as he cannot be glorified if he is not known. It is, moreover,

the proper work of man to know and glorify God; for eternal life consists in this, as it is said: "This is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God." (John 17. 3.)

3. *The happiness and blessedness* of man, which consists in the enjoyment of God and heavenly blessings, is subordinate or next in order to the knowledge of God; for his goodness, mercy, and power are manifest from these.

Obj. But the felicity and happiness of man, his knowledge, and glorifying of God, are properties or conditions with and in which he was created; that is, they are a part of the image of God and of the proper form of man. Therefore, they are not the ends for which man was created, and belong more properly to the first question, which we have already considered, than to this second, which treats of the end of our creation. Ans. They are a part of the proper form and end of man, but in a different respect; for God made man such a being, that, being blessed and happy, he might rightly know and glorify him; and he created him for this end, that he might henceforth and forever be known and praised by him, and that he might continually communicate himself to man. Man was, therefore, created happy, knowing God aright, and glorifying him, which was the form he received in his creation; and, at the same time, he was created for this end that he might forever remain such. It is, therefore, correct to include both these things in speaking upon this subject; because man was created such a being, and for such an end. The first refers to the question *what*, in respect to the beginning; the other, to the question *for what*, in respect to his continuance and perseverance therein. So in Eph. 4. 24, righteousness and true holiness, which constitute the form and very being of the new man, are said to be the end of the same. Nor is it absurd that the same thing should be declared the form and end in a different respect; for that which is the form in respect to the creature, is declared the end in respect to the purpose of the Creator.

The fourth end, for which man was created, is the *manifestation, or declaration*, of the mercy of God in the salvation of the elect, and of his justice in the punishment of the reprobate. This is subordinate to the knowledge and enjoyment of God; for in order that he may be known and communicate himself unto us, it is necessary that he should make a revelation of himself.

The fifth is the *preservation of society* in the human race, which, again, is subordinate to the manifestation of God; for if men did not exist, God could not have those to whom he might reveal himself. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." (Psalms 22. 23.)

The sixth, is a mutual participation in the duties, kindness, and benefits which we owe to each other; which, again, contributes to the preservation of society; for it is necessary to the continuance of the human race, that peace and mutual intercourse exist amongst men.

This first creation of man is to be carefully compared with the misery of mankind, and with our departure from the end for which we were created; that by this means, also, we may know the greatness of our misery. For our knowledge of the greatness of the evil into which we have fallen, will be in the same degree in which we are brought to apprehend the superior excellence of the good which we have lost. This brings us to consider what the image of God was, in which man was created.

OF THE IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN.

Concerning this, we are chiefly to enquire:

I. *What is it, and what are the parts thereof?*
II. *To what extent is it lost, and what remains in man?*
III. *How may it be restored?*

I. What is it, and what are the Parts thereof?

The image of God in man, is a mind rightly knowing the nature, will, and works of God; a will freely obeying God; and a correspondence of all the inclinations, desires, and actions, with the divine will; in a word, it is the spiritual and immortal nature of the soul, and the purity and integrity of the whole man; a perfect blessedness and joy, together with the dignity and majesty of man, in which he excels and rules over all other creatures.

The image of God, therefore, comprehends: 1. The spiritual and immortal substance of the soul, together with the power of knowing and willing. 2. All our natural notions and conceptions of God, and of his will and works. 3. Just and holy actions, inclinations, and volitions, which is the same as perfect righteousness and holiness in the will, heart, and external actions. 4. Felicity, happiness, and glory, with the greatest delight in God, connected, at the same time, with an abundance of all good things, without any misery or corruption. 5. The dominion of man over all creatures, fish, fowls, and other living things. In all these respects, our rational nature resembles, in some degree, the Creator; just as the image resembles the archetype; yet we can never be equal with God. Paul calls the image of God "righteousness and true holiness," (Eph. 4. 24,) because these constitute the principal parts of it; yet he does not exclude wisdom and knowledge, but rather presupposes them; for no one can worship God if he does not know him. Neither does the Apostle, in this passage, exclude happiness and glory; for this, according to the order of divine justice, follows righteousness and true holiness. And wherever righteousness and true holiness are found, there is an absence of all evil, whether of guilt or punishment. This righteousness and true holiness, in which, according to the Apostle, the image of God consists, may also be taken for the same thing; or they may be so distinguished, that righteousness may be considered as referring to such outward and inward actions and motions as are in harmony with the law of God, and a mind judging correctly; whilst holiness may be understood as referring to the qualities of these actions, &c.

Obj. Perfect wisdom and righteousness are peculiar to God alone, nor is there any creature in whom they are found; for the wisdom of all creatures, even of the holy angels, may and does increase. How, then, could the image of God in man embrace perfect righteousness and wisdom? Ans. That which is here called perfect wisdom, does not mean such a wisdom as is ignorant of nothing, but such as is perfect according to the being in whom it is found, or which is such as the Creator designed should be in the creature, and which is sufficient for the happiness of the creature; as, for instance, the wisdom and felicity of the angels is perfect, because

it is such as God designed and willed; and yet something may be continually added unto it, or else it would be infinite. So man was perfectly righteous, because he was conformable to God in all things which were required of him; and yet he was not equal with God, nor was his righteousness perfect in that degree in which God is righteous; but because there was nothing wanting to that perfection in which God created him; which he desired should be in him; and which was sufficient for the happiness of the creature. There is, therefore, an ambiguity in the word perfection. And it is in the sense just explained, that man is said, in the Scriptures, to be the image of God, or that he was made after his likeness.

When Christ, however, is called the image of God, it is in a far different sense, which is evident: 1. *In respect to his divine nature*, in which he is the image of the eternal Father, being co-eternal, consubstantial, and equal with the Father in essential properties and works, and as being that person through whom the Father reveals himself, in creating and preserving all things, but especially in the salvation of those whom he has chosen unto everlasting life. And he is called the image, not of himself, nor of the Holy Ghost, but of the Father; because he is eternally begotten, not of himself, nor of the Holy Ghost, but of the Father. 2. *In respect to his human nature*, in which he is the image of God, created indeed, yet transcending infinitely angels and men, both in the degree and number of gifts, such as wisdom, justice, power, and glory; and, at the same time, resembling, in a peculiar manner, the Father, in doctrine, virtues, and actions, as he himself said to one of his disciples, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." (John 14: 9.)

But angels and men are said to be the image of God, as well in respect to the Son and Holy Ghost, as in respect to the Father, where it is said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Gen. 1: 26.) This is not to be understood, however, of any likeness or equality of essence, but merely of certain properties which have a resemblance to the Godhead, not in degree or essence, but in kind and imitation; for there are some things in angels and men which bear a certain analogy and correspondence with what we find in God, who comprehends, in himself, all that is truly good. Those things, on the other hand, concerning the image of God in man, which were formerly discussed, and denied by the Anthropomorphites, and recently by Osiander, may be found in Ursini Vol. I. pages 154, 155.

II. To what extent is it Lost, and what Remains in Man?

Such, now, was the image of God in which man was originally created, and which was apparent in him before the fall. But after the fall, man lost this glorious image of God, on account of sin, and became transformed into the hateful image of satan. There were, however, some remains and sparks of the image of God still left in man, after his fall, and which even yet continue in those who are unregenerated, of which we may mention the following: 1. The incorporeal, rational, and immortal substance of the soul, together with its powers, of which we would merely make mention of the liberty of the will, so that whatever man wills, he wills freely. 2. There are, in the understanding, many notions and conceptions of God, of nature, and of the distinction which exists between things proper and

improper, which constitute the principles of the arts and sciences. 3. There are some traces and remains of moral virtues, and some ability of regulating the external deportment of the life. 4. The enjoyment of many temporal blessings. 5. A certain dominion over other creatures. Man did not wholly lose his dominion over the various creatures which were put in subjection to him; for many of them still remain subject to him, so that he has the power of governing and using them for his own benefit. These vestiges and remains of the image of God in man, although they are greatly obscured and marred by sin, are, nevertheless, still preserved in us to a certain extent; and that for these ends: 1. That they may be a testimony of the mercy and goodness of God towards us, unworthy as we are. 2. That God may make use of them in restoring his image in us. 3. That the wicked may be without excuse.

But those things which we have lost of the image of God are by far the greatest and most important benefits; of which we may mention the following: 1. The true, perfect, and saving knowledge of God, and of the divine will. 2. Correct views of the works of God, together with light and knowledge in the understanding; in the place of which we now have ignorance, blindness, and darkness. 3. The regulation and government of all the inclinations, desires, and actions; and a conformity with the law of God in the will, heart, and external parts; instead of which there is now a dreadful disorder and depravity of the inclinations and motions of the heart and will, from which all actual sin proceeds. 4. True and perfect dominion over the various creatures of God; for those beasts which at first feared man, now oppose, injure, and lie in wait for him; whilst the ground, which was cursed for his sake, brings forth thorns and briers. 5. The right of using those things which God granted, not to his enemies, but to his children. 6. The happiness of this and of a future life; in the place of which we now have temporal and eternal death, with every conceivable calamity.

Obj. The heathen were distinguished for many virtues, and performed works of great renown. Therefore it would seem that the image of God was not destroyed in them. Ans. The excellent virtues and deeds of renown, which are found among heathen nations, belong, indeed, to the vestiges or remains of the image of God, still preserved in the nature of man; but there is so much wanting, to constitute that true and perfect image of God, which was at first apparent in man, that these virtues are only certain shadows of external propriety, without the obedience of the heart to God, whom they neither know nor worship. Therefore, these works do not please God, since they do not proceed from a proper knowledge of him, and are not done with the intention of glorifying him.

III. How the Image of God may be restored in us.

The restoration of this image of God in man, is effected by him alone, who first conferred it upon man; for he who gives life, and restores it when lost, is the same being. God the Father, restores this image through the Son; because he has "made him unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. 1: 30.) The Son, through the Holy Spirit, "changes us into the same image, from glory unto glory,

as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. 3:18.) And the Holy Ghost carries forward and completes what is begun by the Word, and the use of the Sacraments. "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation." (Rom. 1:16.) This restoration, however, of the image of God in man, is effected in such a manner, that it is only begun, in this life, in such as believe, and is confirmed and carried forward in them, even to the end of life, as it concerns the soul — but as it concerns the whole man, it will be consummated in the resurrection of the body. We are, therefore, to consider who is *the author*, and *what is the order, and manner* in which this restoration is effected?

Question 7. Whence, then, proceeds this depravity of human nature?

Answer. From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise; hence our nature is become so corrupt, that we are all conceived and born in sin.

EXPOSITION.

Here we are to take into consideration, in the first place, the fall and first sin of man, from which the depravity of human nature proceeds; and secondly, we are to consider the subject of sin in general, and especially original sin.

OF THE FALL, AND FIRST SIN OF MAN.

In relation to this, we must enquire:

I. *What was the sin of our first parents?*
II. *What were the causes of it?*
III. *What were the effects of it?*
IV. *Why God permitted it?*

I. What was the Sin of our first Parents?

The fall, or first sin of man, was the disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise; or the eating of the forbidden fruit: "Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2:16, 17.) Man, by the instigation of the devil, violated this command of God; and from this, has proceeded our depravity and misery.

But is the plucking of an apple such a great and heinous offence? It is indeed a most aggravated offence; because there are many horrid sins connected with it. such as: 1. *Pride, ambition, and an admiration of self.* Man, not satisfied with his own dignity, and with the condition in which he was placed, desired to be equal with God. This, God charged upon him, when he said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." (Gen. 3:22.) 2. *Unbelief;* for he charged a lie upon God, who had said, "Thou shalt surely die." The devil denied this, by saying, "Ye shall not surely die;" and accused God of envy, saying, "But God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall

be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." (Gen. 3 : 5.) Adam believed the devil rather than God, and ate of the forbidden fruit; nor did he believe that any punishment would overtake him. But not to believe God, and to believe the devil, is to regard God as though he were no God — yea, it is to substitute the devil in the place of God. This was a sin that was horrible beyond measure. 3. *Contempt and disobedience to God;* which appears in the fact that he ate of the fruit contrary to the command of God. 4. *Ingratitude for benefits received.* He was created in the image of God, and for the enjoyment of eternal life; for which benefit he made this return, that he harkened to the devil more than to God. 5. *Unnaturalness, and the want of love to posterity.* Miserable man that he was! He did not think that as he had received these gifts for himself and his posterity, so he would also, by sinning, lose them for himself and his posterity. 6. *Apostacy*, or a manifest falling away from God to the devil, whom he believed and obeyed, rather than God; and whom he set up in the place of God, separating himself from God. He did not ask of God those things which he was to receive; but, by the advice of the devil, he wished to obtain equality with God. The fall of man, therefore, was no trifling, nor single offence; but it was a sin manifold and horrible in its nature, on account of which God justly rejected him, with all of his posterity.

Hence, we may easily return an answer to the objection: No just judge inflicts a great punishment on account of a small offence. God is a just judge. Therefore, he ought not to have punished so severely, in our first parents, the eating of an apple. Ans. It was not, however, a small offence as we have already shown; but a most aggravated sin — comprehending pride, ingratitude, apostacy, &c. Hence, God justly inflicted a severe punishment, on account of this act of disobedience. And if it be still further objected, that God ought to have spared the posterity of Adam, in as much as he himself has declared, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father;" (Ez. 18: 20.) we would reply, that this is true only where the son is not a partaker of the wickedness of the father; but we are all partakers of the sin of Adam.

II. What were the Causes of the First Sin?

The first sin of man had its origin, not in God, but was brought about by the instigation of the devil, and the free will of man. The devil tempted man to fall away from God; and man, yielding to this temptation, willingly separated himself from God. And although God left man to himself in this temptation, yet He is not the cause of the fall, the sin, or the destruction of man; because, in this desertion, he neither designed, nor accomplished any of these things. He merely put man upon trial, to show that he is entirely unable to do, or to retain aught that is good, if he is not preserved and controlled by the Holy Spirit; and with this, his trial, God, in his just judgment, permitted the sin of man to concur.

The wisdom of man reasons and concludes differently, as is evident from the objection which we often hear: He who withdraws, in the time of temptation, that grace, without which it is not possible to prevent a fall, is the cause of the fall. But God withdrew, from man, his grace, in the trial through which he was called to pass, so that man could not but fall.

Therefore, God was the cause of the fall of man. Ans. The major proposition is true only of him who withholds grace, when he is obligated not to withdraw it; who takes it from him who is desirous of it, and does not wilfully reject it; and who withholds it out of malice. But it is not true of him who is not bound to preserve the grace which he at first gave; and who does not withdraw it from him who desires it, but only from him who is willing for him so to do, and who, of his own account, rejects the grace that is proffered him; and who does not, therefore, withhold it because he envies the sinner righteousness and eternal life; but that he may make a trial of him to whom he has imparted his grace. He who thus forsakes any one, is not the cause of sin, even though it necessarily follows this desertion and withdrawal of grace. And in as much as God withheld his grace from man in the time of his temptation, not in the first, but in the last manner just described, he is not the cause of his sin and destruction; but man alone is guilty for wilfully rejecting the grace of God.

It is again objected, by men of carnal minds: He who wills to tempt any one, when he certainly knows that he will fall, if he be tempted, wills the sin of him who falls. God willed that man should be tempted by the devil, when he knew that he would certainly fall; for if he had not willed it, man could not have been tempted. Therefore, God is the cause of the fall. Ans. We deny the major, if it be understood in its naked and simple form; for he is not the cause of sin, who wills that he who may fall should be tempted for the purpose of being put upon trial, and for the manifestation of the weakness of the creature, which was the sense in which God tempted man. But the devil tempting man, with the design that he might sin, and separate himself from God; and man, of his own free will, yielding to this temptation, in opposition to the command of God; they are both the cause of sin, of which we shall speak more hereafter.

III. What are the Effects of the First Sin?

The effects of the first sin are: 1. Exposure to death, and the privation and destruction of the image of God in our first parents. 2. Original sin in their posterity, which includes exposures to eternal death, and a depravity and aversion of our whole nature to God. 3. All actual sins, which proceed from original sin; for that which is the cause of a cause, is also the cause of the effect. The first sin is the cause of original sin, and this of actual sins. 4. All the various evils which are inflicted upon men as punishments for sin. The first sin, therefore, is the cause of all other sins, and of the punishments which are inflicted upon the children of men. But whether it is in accordance with the justice of God to punish posterity for the sins of their parents, will be hereafter explained, when we come to treat the subject of original sin.

IV. Why did God permit Sin?

God had the power of preserving man from falling, if he had willed so to do; but he permitted him to fall, that is, he did not grant him the grace of resisting the temptation of the devil, for these two reasons: First, that he might furnish an exhibition of the weakness of the creature, when left to himself, and not preserved in original righteousness by his Creator;

and secondly, that by this occasion, God might display his goodness, mercy, and grace, in saving, through Christ, all them that believe; and manifest his justice and power in punishing the wicked and reprobate for their sins, as it is said, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all, and that every mouth might be stopped." "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory." (Rom. 11: 32; 9: 22.)

OF SIN IN GENERAL.

The questions which are usually discussed, in relation to sin in general, are chiefly the following:

I. *From what does it appear that sin is in the world, and also in us?*
II. *What is sin?*
III. *How many kinds of sin are there?*
IV. *What is the origin of sin, or the causes of it?*
V. *What are the effects of sin?*

I. From what does it appear that Sin is in the World, and that it is also in us?

That sin is in the world, and also in us, may be proven by a variety of arguments. First, God declares that we are all guilty of sin, which declaration ought especially to be believed, in as much as God is the searcher of the heart, and an eye-witness to all our actions. (Gen. 6: 5; 18: 21. Jer. 17: 9. Rom. 1: 21; 3: 10; 7: 18. Ps. 14 & 53. Isaiah 59.) Secondly, the law of God recognizes sin, as we have already shown, in our exposition of the third and fifth questions of the Catechism, where these declarations of the law were referred to: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." "The law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression." "The law entered that the offence might abound." "I had not known sin, but by the law." (Rom. 3: 20; 4: 15; 5: 20; 7: 7.) Thirdly, conscience convinces, and convicts us of sin; for God even apart from his written law, has preserved in us certain general principles of the natural law, sufficient to accuse and condemn us. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them." "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these not having the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts, the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing, one another." (Rom. 1: 19; 2: 13–14.) Fourthly, punishments and death to which all men are subject; yea, our cemeteries, grave-yards, and places of execution, are all so many sermons upon the evil of sin; because God being just never inflicts punishment upon any of his creatures unless it be for sin, according to what the Scriptures say: "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "The wages of sin is death." "Cursed is every one that confirmeth not all the words of this law, to do them." (Rom. 5: 12; 6: 23. Deut. 27: 26.)

The benefit of this question is: 1. That we may have matter for constant humiliation and penitence. 2. That we may turn away from, and not be ensnared by the errors and corruptions of the Anabaptists and Libertines, who deny that they have any sin, in contradiction to the express declaration of the word of God, which affirms that, "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves." (John 1: 8.) And also in contradiction to all experience; for they themselves frequently do many things which God in his law declares to be sins, but which they affirm, although most falsely, to be the workings of the Holy Spirit. They also live in misery, being subject to disease and death, no less than others, which, if they were not sinners, would certainly be in opposition to the rule, and law, *Where there is no sin, there death is not.*

Does any one ask, whether we may not also obtain a knowledge of sin from the gospel, since the gospel, in exhorting us to seek for righteousness, not in ourselves, but out of ourselves in Christ, declares us sinners? We reply, that the gospel does indeed pronounce us sinners, but not in particular as the law does; neither does it avowedly teach *what, and how manifold sin is, what it deserves, &c.*, which is the proper work of the law; but it does this in general by presupposing what the law affirms, just as an inferior science assumes certain principles which are taken from another that is higher, and superior to it. After the law has convinced us that we are sinners, the gospel takes this principle as established, and concludes that in as much as we are sinners in ourselves, we must, therefore, seek righteousness out of ourselves, in Christ, if we would be saved.

We may, therefore, conclude from these five considerations, that we are all sinners in the sight of God: From the testimony of God himself — from the law of God in particular — from the gospel in general — from the sense of conscience, and from the various punishments which God, being just, would not inflict upon us, if we had not sinned.

II. What is Sin?

Sin is the transgression of the law, or whatever is in opposition thereto, whether it be the want of righteousness (defectus), or an inclination, or action contrary to the divine law, and so offending God, and subjecting the creature to his eternal wrath, unless forgiveness be obtained for the sake of the Son of God, our Mediator. Its *general nature* is a want of righteousness, or an inclination, or action not in accordance with the law of God. To speak more properly, however, it may be said that the want of righteousness is this general nature of sin, whilst inclinations and actions are rather the matter of sin. The *difference*, or formal character of sin, is opposition to the law, which the Apostle John calls *the transgression of the law*. The *property*, which necessarily attaches itself to sin, is the sinner's guiltiness, which is a desert of punishment, temporal and eternal, according to the order of divine justice. Sin has, therefore, what is usually termed a double form, or a two-fold nature, which may be said to consist in opposition to the law, and guilt; or it may be regarded as including two sides, the former of which is opposition to the law, and the latter desert of punishment. The *accidental* condition of sin is thus expressed, *unless forgiveness be obtained, &c.*, for it is not according to the nature of sin, but by an accident, that those who believe in Christ are not punished with

eternal death; because sin is not imputed to them, but graciously remitted for Christ's sake.

This want of righteousness, which is comprehended in sin, includes, as it respects the mind, ignorance and doubt with regard to God and his will; and as it respects the heart, it includes a want of love to God and our neighbor, a want of delight in God and an ardent desire and purpose to obey all his commandments; together with an omission of such actions as the law of God requires from us. *Disordered inclinations* consist in a stubbornness of the heart, and an unwillingness to comply with the law of God, and the judgment of the mind, as it respects actions which are proper and improper; together with a depravity and propensity of nature to do those things which God forbids, which evil is called *concupiscence.*

That this want of righteousness and these disordered inclinations are sins, and condemned of God, may be proven: First, from the law of God, which expressly condemns all these things, when it declares, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law, to do them"; and "Thou shalt not covet." (Deut. 27: 26. Ex. 20: 17.) The law also requires of men the opposite gifts and exercises, such as perfect knowledge and love to God and our neighbor, saying: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c." "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, &c." "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Deut. 6: 5. John 17: 3. Ex. 20: 3.) Secondly, the same thing is proven by the many testimonies of Scripture which condemn and speak of these evils as sins, as when it is said: "Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually." "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." "I had not known lust, (that is, I had not known it to be sin,) except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." (Gen. 6: 8. Jer. 17: 9. Rom. 7: 7.) See also John 3: 5. 1 Cor. 2: 14; 15: 28. Thirdly, by the punishment and death of infants, who, although they neither do good, nor evil, and sin not after the similitude of Adam's transgression, nevertheless have sin, on account of which death reigns in them. This is that ignorance of and aversion to God of which we have already spoken.

Obj. 1. That which we do not will, as well as that which we cannot avoid, is no sin. But we do not will this want of righteousness, neither can we prevent disordered inclinations from arising within us. Therefore, they are no sins. Ans. The major proposition is true in a civil court, but not in the judgment of God, before whom whatever is in opposition to his law, whether it can be avoided or not, is sin, and as such deserves punishment. The Scriptures clearly teach these two things, that the wisdom of the flesh cannot be subject to the law of God, and that all those who are not subject thereto, stand exposed to the curse of the law.

Obj. 2. Nature is good. Our inclinations and desires are natural. Therefore, they are good. Ans. Nature is, indeed, good, if we look upon it as it came from the hands of God, and before it became corrupted by sin; for all things which God made, he declared to be very good. (Gen. 1: 31.) And even now, nature is good as to its substance, and as it was made of God; but not as to its qualities, and as it has become corrupted.

Obj. 3. Punishments are no sins. Disordered inclinations and a want of righteousness are punishments of the first sin of man. Therefore, they are no sins. Ans. The major proposition is true in a civil court, but not

in the judgment of God, who often punishes sin with sin, as the Apostle Paul most clearly shows in Rom. 1: 27; 2 Thess. 4: 11. God has power also to deprive his creatures of his spirit, which power none of his creatures possess.

III. How many kinds of Sin are there?

There are five principal divisions of sin. The first is that of original and actual sin. This distinction is taught in Rom. 5: 14; 7: 20; 9: 11.

Original Sin.

Original sin is the guilt of the whole human race, on account of the fall of our first parents. It consists in a want of the knowledge of God and of his will in the mind, and of an inclination to obey God with the heart and will; in the place of which there is an inclination to those things which the law of God forbids, and an aversion to those things which it commands, resulting from the fall of our first parents, Adam and Eve, and from them made to pass over into all their posterity, thus corrupting our whole nature, so that all, on account of this depravity, are subject to the eternal wrath of God; nor can we do anything pleasing to him, unless forgiveness be obtained for the sake of the Son of God, our Mediator, and the Holy Ghost renew our nature. Of this kind of sin it is said, "Death reigned even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." "In sin did my mother conceive me." (Rom. 5: 14. Ps. 51: 7.) Original sin comprehends, therefore, these two things: exposure to eternal condemnation on account of the fall of our first parents, and a depravity of our entire nature since the fall. Paul includes both, when he says: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5: 12.) The same thing is expressed, although somewhat more obscurely, in the common definition of original sin which is generally attributed to Anselm: "*Original sin is a want of original righteousness which ought to be in us.*" Original righteousness was not only a conformity of our nature with the law of God, but it also included divine acceptance and approbation. In the place of this conformity with the divine law, we now have depravity; and in the place of this approbation, we have the displeasure of God, which has followed in consequence of the fall. The same thing is true of that definition of Hugo: "*Original sin is that which we inherit from our birth, through ignorance in the understanding, and concupiscence in the flesh.*"

In opposition to this doctrine of original sin, the Pelagians formerly believed, and taught, as the Anabaptists do at this day, that there is no original sin—that posterity are not guilty on account of the fall of our first parents, and that sin is not derived from them by propagation; but that every one sins, and contracts guilt only by imitating the bad examples of others. Augustin refuted these Pelagians in many books. There are others, who admit that we are all guilty on account of the fall of our first parents, but deny that we are born with such depravity as that which deserves condemnation; for the want of righteousness, and the propensity to evil which we all have by nature, they contend, cannot be regarded as sins.

We must hold, and maintain, in opposition to all these heretics, these four propositions: 1. That the whole human race is subject to the eternal wrath of God on account of the disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve. 2. That we are also, even from the moment of our birth, destitute of righteousness, and have inclinations contrary to the law of God. 3. That this want of righteousness, and these inclinations with which we are born, are sins, and deserve the eternal wrath of God. 4. That these evils are derived and contracted, not only by imitation, but by the propagation of the corrupt nature which we have all, Christ excepted, derived from our first parents.

The first, second, and third propositions have been already sufficiently demonstrated; the fourth is proven:

First, by the testimony of Scripture. "We are all by nature the children of wrath even as others." "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" "I was born in iniquity." "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (Eph. 2: 3. Rom. 5: 6, 19. Job 14: 4. Ps. 51: 7. John 3: 5.)

Secondly, infants die, and are to be baptized. Therefore they must have sin. But they cannot sin by imitation. It remains, therefore, that it must be born in them, according as it is said: "Thou wast called a transgressor from the womb." "The heart of man is evil from his youth." (Is. 48: 8. Gen. 8: 21.) Ambrose says: "*Who is just before God, when an infant but a day old cannot be free from sin?*"

Thirdly, everything that is born has the nature of that from which it has proceeded, as it respects the substance, and accidents of the species to which it belongs. But we are all born of corrupt and sinful parents; therefore we all, by our birth, inherit, or become, partakers of their corruption and guilt.

Fourthly, by the death of Christ, who is the second Adam, we obtain a twofold grace: we mean justification and regeneration. It follows, therefore, that we must all have derived from the first Adam the twofold evil of guilt and corruption of nature, otherwise there had been no necessity for a twofold grace and remedy.

Obj. 1. If original sin be transmitted from parents to their offspring, it must be either through the body, or through the soul. But it cannot be through the body, because it is destitute of reason. Nor can it be through the soul, because this is not produced by transmission, or derived from the soul of the parent, since it is a substance which is spiritual and indivisible; nor is it created corrupt, since God is not the author of sin. Therefore, original sin is certainly not transmitted by nature. Ans. We deny the minor proposition; because the soul, although created pure and holy by God, may nevertheless contract corruption from the body into which it is infused, even though it be destitute of reason. Nor is it absurd to say that the corrupt constitution of the body, with its propensity to evil, is an unfit instrument for the good actions of the soul, and that the soul, not established in righteousness, may become polluted, and so fall from its own integrity, so soon as it becomes united with the body. We also deny the *consequence* of the above syllogism, for the reason that the parts which are enumerated in the first proposition are not properly expressed. Original

sin is neither transmitted through the body, nor through the soul, but through the transgression of our first parents; on account of which, God, even whilst he creates the soul, at the same time deprives it of original righteousness, and such other gifts as he conferred upon our first parents upon the condition that they should transmit them to, or lose them for, their posterity, according as they themselves should retain or lose them. Nor is God, by this act, unjust, or the cause of sin; for this want of righteousness in respect to God, who inflicts it on account of the disobedience of our first parents, is no sin, but a most just punishment; although, in respect to our first parents, who drew it upon themselves and their posterity, it is a sin. The fallacy of the above argument will now be apparent if we state more fully the major proposition: *original sin is transmitted to posterity either through the body, or through the soul, or through the transgression of our first parents, and the desert of this want of righteousness.* For just as original sin came to exist in our first parents on account of their transgression, so it is transmitted to posterity on account of the same. This is not that small chink, or unimportant subject, about which the schoolmen disputed so warmly, whether the soul be transmitted from our parents by generation, and whether it becomes polluted by its connection with the body; but it is that wide gate through which original sin flows violently and infects our nature, as Paul testifies when he says: "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners. (Rom. 5: 19.)

To this it is objected: The want of original righteousness is sin. God has inflicted this, by creating in us a soul destitute of those gifts which he would have conferred upon Adam had he not sinned. Therefore he is the author of sin. Ans. There is in the minor proposition a fallacy of accident. This want of righteousness is sin in respect to Adam and us, since by his, and our fault we have drawn it upon ourselves, and now eagerly receive it. That the creature should be destitute of righteousness and of conformity to God, is repugnant to the law, and is sin. But in respect to God, it is a most just punishment of disobedience; which punishment is in harmony with the nature and law of God.

It is further objected: God ought not to punish the transgression of Adam with such a punishment as that which he knew would result in the destruction of the whole nature of man. Ans. God's justice must be satisfied, even if the whole world should perish. It, moreover, behooved him to avenge in this manner the obstinacy of man, from regard to his extreme justice and truth. An offence committed against the highest good, deserves the most extreme punishment, which consists in the eternal destruction of the creature; for God has said "Thou shalt surely die." It is, therefore, of his mercy that he should rescue any from this general ruin, and save them through Christ.

Obj. 2. It is natural that we should desire objects; therefore these desires are no sins. Ans. Such desires as are directed upon proper objects, and which God has excited and ordained, are no sins. But such as are inordinate, and contrary to the law, are sins. For to desire is not of itself sinful, inasmuch as it of itself is good, because it is natural; but to desire contrary to the law is sin.

Obj. 3. Original sin is removed, as far as it respects the saints; therefore they cannot transmit it to their offspring. Ans. The godly are indeed

delivered from original sin as it respects the guilt thereof, which is remitted unto them through Christ; but in as far as it respects its formal character and essence,—that is, as an evil opposing itself to the law of God,—it remains. And although those to whom sin is remitted are at the same time regenerated by the Holy Ghost, yet this renewal of their nature is not perfect in this life; therefore they transmit the corrupt nature which they themselves have to their posterity.

To this it is objected: That which the parents do not possess, they cannot transmit to their posterity. The guilt of original sin is taken away from all those parents who have been regenerated. Therefore, at least, guilt cannot be transmitted. Ans. The major is to be distinguished. Parents do not transmit to their children that which they have not by nature; for they are freed from the guilt of sin, not by nature, but by the grace of Christ. It is for this reason that they do not transmit to their posterity, by nature, the righteousness which is imputed unto them by grace; but they transmit the corruption and condemnation to which they are by nature subject. And the reason why they transmit their guilt, and not their righteousness, is this: their children are born, not according to grace, but according to nature. Nor are we to conceive of grace and justification as restricted, and transmitted by carnal propagation, but by the most free election of God. Jacob and Esau are examples of this, &c. Augustin illustrates this by two forcible comparisons. The one is that of the grains of wheat, which, although they are sown after having been separated from their stalk, chaff, beard, and ear, by threshing, still spring out of the earth again, with all these. This comes to pass because the threshing and cleaning are not natural to the grain, but are the work of human industry. The other is that of a circumcised father, who, although he himself has no foreskin, yet begets a son with one; and this also happens because circumcision was not upon the father by nature, but by the covenant.

Obj. 4. If the root or tree be holy, the branches are also holy; therefore the children of those that are holy are also holy, and free from original sin. (Rom. 11: 16.) Ans. There is here an incorrectness in the use of terms that are ambiguous in their signification; for holiness, as it is here used, does not signify freedom from sin, or purity of heart, but that dignity and privilege peculiar to the posterity of Abraham; because God, on account of the covenant which he made with Abraham, promised that he would at all times dispose some of his seed to do his will, and would grant unto them true inward holiness; and also because they had obtained a right and title to his church.

Obj. 5. But the children of believers are holy, according to the declaration of St. Paul, 1 Cor. 7: 14. Therefore they have no original sin. Ans. This is an incorrect conclusion, drawn from a perversion of the figure of speech that is here employed: for when it is said *they are holy*, it does not mean that all the children of the faithful are regenerated, or that they obtain holiness by carnal propagation; for it is said, in Rom. 9: 11, 13, of Jacob and Esau, that the one was loved and the other was hated before they were born, or had done good or evil; but it means that the children of the godly are holy as it respects the external fellowship of the church —that they are considered citizens and members thereof, and as being included in the number of those who are called, and sanctified, unless when

they come to years of maturity they bear testimony against themselves by their impiety and unbelief, and so declare that they have forfeited all their rights and privileges.

Obj. 6. If sin be transmitted to posterity by natural generation, then those who will live at the latest period of the history of the human race will have to bear the sins of all the previous generations, whilst those who lived before them will have borne the sins of only a portion of their ancestry; consequently those who will live last upon the earth will be the most miserable, which is absurd and inconsistent with the justice of God. Ans. It would not be absurd, even if God were to desert, and punish more heavily, the last of our race: for the greater the number of sins that are committed, and treasured up by the human race, the more fiercely does his anger burn, and the more aggravated are the punishments which he inflicts upon men, according to what is written: "The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias," &c. (Gen. 15: 16. Matt. 22: 35.) We may also reply, that although God in his justice permits original sin, or the corruption and guilt of our nature, to pass upon all the posterity of Adam, yet he, at the same time, of his mercy, sets bounds to this sin, that posterity may not always suffer punishment for the actual transgression of their ancestors, nor imitate them; and that the children of wicked parents may not be evil, or worse and more miserable than their parents.

Obj. 7. But it is said, Ez. 18: 20, that the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; therefore it is unjust that posterity should endure punishment for the sin of Adam. Ans. The son shall not, indeed, bear the iniquity of the father, nor make satisfaction for his transgression, if he does not approve of it, nor imitate it, but condemns and avoids it. But we justly suffer on account of the sin of Adam: 1. Because all of us approve of, and follow his transgression. 2. Because the offence of Adam is also ours; for we were all in Adam when he sinned, as the Apostle testifies: "We have all sinned in him." (Rom. 5: 12.) 3. Because the entire nature of Adam became guilty; and as we have proceeded from his very substance,—being, as it were, a part of him,—we must also necessarily be guilty ourselves. 4. Because Adam had received the gifts of God upon the condition that he would also impart them unto us, if he retained them; or lose them for us also, if he lost them. Hence it is, that when Adam lost these gifts, he did not merely lose them for himself, but also for all his posterity.

Obj. 8. All sin implies an exercise of the will. But infants are not capable of such an exercise of the will as is necessary, in order to the commission of sin. Therefore they cannot be said to commit sin. Ans. The whole argument is conceded, as far as it has respect to actual sin, but not as it relates to original sin, which consists in the depravity of our nature. Again, we deny what is affirmed in the minor proposition, because infants are not destitute of the power of willing; for although they may not be able to will sin as something that is actually done, yet they do will in inclination.

Obj. 9. The corruption and evils of our nature rather deserve pity than censure and punishment. Aristotle himself declares: "*That no man censures the defects which attach themselves to our nature.*" Original sin

is a defect and corruption of our nature. Therefore it does not deserve punishment. Ans. The major proposition is true of such evils as are brought upon us, not by our negligence or wickedness, as if any one should be born blind, or become so by disease, or by a stroke from another. Such an one would indeed deserve to be pitied, rather than upbraided. But evils which we have all wickedly brought upon ourselves, as is the case with original sin, are justly deserving of censure, as Aristotle also testifies, when he adds: "*But every one finds fault with such an one as becomes blind by excess of wine, or any other wicked action.*" So much concerning original sin.

Of Actual Sin, and the remaining distinctions of Sin, with its causes and effects.

Actual sin includes all those actions which are opposed to the law of God, whether they be such as have respect to the understanding, will, and heart, or to the external deportment of our lives, as to think, to will, to follow, and to do that which is evil; and an omission of those things which the law of God commands, as to be ignorant of, not to will, to shun and omit that which is good. The division of sin into sins of commission and omission is properly in place here.

The second division of sin. This distinction has respect to sin as reigning, and not reigning. By *reigning sin* we understand that form of sin to which the sinner makes no resistance through the grace of the Holy Spirit. He is therefore exposed to everlasting death, unless he repent and obtain forgiveness through Christ. Or it includes every sin which is not deplored, and to which the grace of the Holy Spirit makes no resistance, and on account of which he in whom it reigns is exposed to everlasting punishment, not only according to the order of divine justice, but also according to the nature of the thing itself. The following passages of Scripture refer to this distinction of sin: "Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies." "He that committeth sin," that is, he who sins habitually, willfully, and with delight, "is of the devil." (Rom. 6: 12. 1 John 3: 8.) It is called *reigning sin*, because it gratifies, and enslaves those who are the subjects of it, and also because it holds dominion over the man in whom it reigns, and exposes him to eternal condemnation. All the sins of men in their unregenerate state are of this character. There are also some sins of this description in those who have been regenerated, such as errors in the ground-work of faith, and such offences as are against the conscience, which, unless they are repented of, are inconsistent with an assurance of the forgiveness of sins, and true christian comfort. That those who are regenerate may be guilty of sin under this form, the lamentable fall of such holy men as Aaron and David abundantly testifies. Those objections which are commonly brought against what is here advanced, may be found in Ursini vol. 1, page 207.

Sin which *does not thus reign*, is that which the sinner resists by the grace of the Holy Spirit. It does not, therefore, expose him to eternal death, because he has repented and found favor through Christ. Such sins are disordered inclinations and unholy desires, a want of righteousness, and many sins of ignorance, of omission, and of infirmity, which remain in the godly as long as they continue in this life; but which they, nevertheless,

acknowledge, deplore, hate, resist, and earnestly pray may be forgiven them for the sake of Christ, the Mediator, saying, *forgive us our debts.* Hence the godly retain their faith and consolation, notwithstanding they are not free from these sins. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk after the Spirit." "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults." (1 John 1: 8. Rom. 7: 18; 8: 1. Ps. 19: 13.)

The common distinction of sin into *mortal and venial* may be referred to this division. For although every sin in its own nature is mortal, by which we mean, that it deserves eternal death, yet reigning sin may be properly so called, inasmuch as he who perseveres in it will at length be overtaken by destruction. But it becomes *venial sin*, that is, it does not call for eternal death, when it does not reign in the regenerate who resist it by the grace of God; and this takes place, not because it merits pardon in itself, or does not deserve punishment, but because it is freely forgiven those that believe on account of the satisfaction of Christ, and is not imputed to them unto condemnation, as it is said: "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8: 1.) When thus understood, the distinction of *mortal and venial sin* may be retained; but not when it is understood in the sense in which the Romish priests use it, as if that were mortal sin which deserves eternal death on account of its greatness, and that venial which does not deserve eternal death on account of its smallness, but merely some temporal punishment. Hence we would prefer, in the place of mortal and venial sin, the distinction which we have made of sin into reigning, and not reigning, and that for the following reasons: 1. Because the terms mortal and venial are ambiguous and obscure. All sins are mortal in their own nature. The apostle John also calls the sin against the Holy Ghost mortal, or unto death. 2. Because the Scriptures do not use these terms, especially venial sin. 3. Because of the errors of the Papists, who call those sins venial which are small and do not deserve eternal death, whilst the Scriptures declare: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." "Whosoever shall offend in one point, is guilty of all." "The wages of sin is death." "Whoso shall break one of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of God." (Deut. 27: 26. James 2: 10. Rom. 6: 23. Matt. 5: 19.) In a word, every sin in its own nature is mortal, and deserves eternal death. But it becomes venial, that is, it does not work eternal death in the regenerate, because their sins have been freely pardoned for the sake of Christ.

The third division of sin. There is sin which is against the conscience, and sin which is not against the conscience. *Sin against the conscience* is, when any one knowing the will of God does, with design and purpose, that which is contrary thereto; or it is that sin which is committed by those who sin knowingly and willingly, as did David, when he committed the sin of adultery and murder. *Sin not against the conscience* is, when any one does any thing contrary to the law of God, ignorantly or unwillingly; or it is that which is indeed known to be sin, and deplored by the sinner, but which he cannot perfectly avoid in this life, as original sin, and many sins of ignorance, of omission, and infirmity. For we omit many

things that are good, and do many that are evil, being suddenly overcome by infirmity, as Peter was, when by the force of temptation he denied Christ, knowingly, indeed, but not willingly. Hence he wept so bitterly, and did not lose his faith entirely, according to the promise of Christ: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." (Luke 22: 32.) This was not reigning sin, much less the sin against the Holy Ghost; because Peter loved Christ no less when he denied him than when he wept over his sin, although his love did not at the time shew itself an account of his fear, excited by the dangerous circumstances in which he was placed. Such was also the sin which Paul acknowledged and lamented, when he said: "The good, that I would, I do not; but the evil, which I would not, that I do." (Rom. 7: 19.) His blasphemy and persecution of the church were likewise sins of ignorance, for says he: "I did it ignorantly in unbelief, and therefore obtained mercy." (1 Tim. 1: 13.)

The fourth division of sin. There is sin which is unpardonable—sin against the Holy Ghost, and unto death: and there is also pardonable sin—sin which is not against the Holy Ghost, nor unto death. The Scriptures speak of this distinction of sin in Matt. 12: 31. Mark 3: 29. 1 John 5: 16. By *unpardonable sin*, or the sin against the Holy Ghost, and unto death, is meant a denial of, and a willful opposition to, the acknowledged truth of God, in connection with his will and works, concerning which the mind has been fully enlightened and convinced by the testimony of the Holy Ghost; all of which proceeds, not from fear or infirmity, but from a determined hatred to the truth, and from a heart filled with bitter malice. This sin God punishes with perpetual blindness, so that those who are guilty of it never repent, and consequently obtain no pardon. It is called *unpardonable*, not because its greatness exceeds the value of Christ's merit, but because he who commits it is punished with total blindness, and does not receive the gift of repentance. It is a sin of a peculiarly aggravated nature, and is, therefore, followed by a punishment in accordance with its character, which punishment is final blindness and impenitency. And where there is no repentance, there is no forgiveness obtained. "Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." "But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." (Matt. 12: 32. Mark 3 29.)

It is called the sin *against the Holy Ghost*, not that any one may commit an offence against the Holy Ghost which is not at the same time an offence against the Father and the Son, but by a significant form of speech, inasmuch as it is in an especial manner committed against the Holy Ghost, that is, against his peculiar and immediate office and work, which consists in the enlightening of the mind.

It is called by the Apostle John a sin *unto death*, not because it alone is a mortal sin, and deserves death, but, as has just been remarked, because it especially merits death, and because those who are guilty of it will most assuredly die, seeing that they never repent, or obtain forgiveness. The Apostle John, therefore, does not desire that we should pray for it; because it is in vain that we ask God to grant the pardon of it. The Scriptures also speak of this sin in other places, as in Heb. 6: 4–8; 10: 26–29. Tit. 3: 10, 11.

Certain Rules to be observed in relation to the Sin against the Holy Ghost.

1. The sin against the Holy Ghost is not found in every wicked person; but only in those who have been enlightened by the Holy Ghost, and who have been fully convinced of the truth, as Saul, Judas, &c.

2. Every sin which is against the Holy Ghost is reigning sin, and a sin against conscience, but not the reverse. For it may occur that some one may, either ignorantly, or even knowingly and willingly, hold certain errors, or violate some of the commandments of God, from weakness, or torture, or from fear of danger, and yet not purposely and maliciously impugn the truth, or totally fall from holiness, and continue in sensuality and a contempt of all that is sacred; but he may return unto God and repent of his sin. These forms of sin differ, therefore, as genus and species.

3. The sin against the Holy Ghost is not committed by the elect, or those who are truly converted. They can never perish; for Christ safely preserves and saves them. "They shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands. (John 10: 28. Also, 2 Tim. 2: 19. 1 Pet. 1: 5. 1 John 5: 15.) Hence those who sin against the Holy Ghost were never truly converted and called. They went out from us, because they were not of us.

4. No one should decide hastily or rashly concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost; yea, judgment should in no case be passed upon any one, unless it be *a posteriori*, for the reason that we do not know what is in the heart of man. Many things which are controverted in relation to this subject, may be found in Ursini vol. 1, page 213, &c.

Sin that is pardonable, or not against the Holy Ghost, is any sin of which men may repent, and obtain forgiveness.

The fifth division of sin. There is that which is sin *per se*, and that which becomes sin by accident. Those things which are sins *of themselves, and in their own nature*, are those inclinations, desires and actions which are contrary to, and forbidden by, the law of God. Yet they are not sins, in as far as they are mere activities, or in respect to God, who moves all things (for motions, in as far as they are such, are good in themselves, and from God, in whom we live, move, and have our being); but in respect to us they are sins, in as far as they are committed by us contrary to the law of God; in which sense they are all in, and according to their own nature sins.

Those things which are *sins by accident*, are the actions of hypocrites, and such as have not been regenerated, which, although they have been prescribed and commanded by God, are nevertheless displeasing to him, inasmuch as they do not proceed from faith, and a desire to glorify God. The same thing may be said of indifferent actions, which are performed and attended with shame. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." "Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure." "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Rom. 14: 23. Tit. 1: 15. Heb. 11: 6.)

All the virtues, therefore, of the unregenerate, such as the chastity of Scipio, the bravery of Julius Cæsar, the fidelity of Romulus, the justice of Aristides, &c., although they are in themselves good, and commanded by God, yet they are nevertheless sins by accident, and hateful to God, both because the persons by whom they are done do not please him, not

being in a state of reconciliation, and also because they are not done in the manner, nor with the design which God requires; that is, they do not proceed from faith, and are not done for the glory of God. These conditions are so necessary in every good work, that without them our best actions are sinful; as the prayers, the alms, the sacrifices, &c., of hypocrites and the wicked are sins; because they do not spring from faith, and are not done out of regard to the glory of God. "Hypocrites give their alms in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward." "He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man," &c. (Matt. 6: 2. Is. 66: 3.)

There is, therefore, a great difference between the virtues of the regenerate and the unregenerate. For, 1. The good works of the regenerate proceed from faith, and are pleasing to God; but it is different with the works of the unregenerate. 2. The regenerate do all things to the glory of God; the unregenerate and hypocrites act with reference to their own glory. 3. The actions of the regenerate are connected with a sincere desire to obey God; the unregenerate and hypocrites exhibit only an outward profession, without inward obedience. Their virtues are, therefore, not such in reality; they are nothing more than shadows, and faint resemblances of that which is truly good. 4. The imperfection of the works of the regenerate is covered by the satisfaction of Christ, and the corruption which is still inherent in them is not imputed unto them, nor is it objected to them that they defile the gifts of God by their sins; but the virtues of the unregenerate which are good in themselves, are and remain sins by accident, and are defiled by many other crimes. 5. The good works of the unregenerate are honored merely with temporal rewards, and that not because they are pleasing to God, but that he may thus invite and encourage them, and others to such honesty and external deportment as is necessary for the well-being of the human race; but God accepts the works of the righteous for the sake of Christ, and graciously crowns them with temporal and eternal rewards, as it is said: "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim. 4: 8.) Finally, the unregenerate, by performing works commanded by God, obtain a mitigation of punishment, that they may not with other wicked persons suffer more grievously in this life; but the righteous do these things, not only that their sufferings may be alleviated, but also that they may be entirely freed therefrom. Obj. Those things which are sins ought not to be done. The works of the unregenerate, although they are good in the estimation of men and the civil law, are nevertheless sins. Therefore they ought not to be done. Ans. There is here a fallacy of accident. The major proposition is true of those things which are sins in themselves; the minor of those which are sins by accident. Those things now which are sins in themselves ought to be strictly avoided; but those which are sins by accident ought not to be omitted, but amended and performed in the manner and for the end for which God has commanded.

But this external discipline and conformity to the law is necessary even on the part of those who have not been regenerated. 1. On account of the command of God. 2. That they may escape the punishment which follows the violation of outward propriety. 3. That the peace and well-being of society at large may be preserved. Lastly, that the way to repentance may not be shut up by perseverance in a course of open transgression.

There is likewise a great difference between the sins of the regenerate and the unregenerate. For, as we have already shown, especially under the second division of this subject, there are many remains of sin still found in those who have been renewed by the Holy Spirit; such as original sin, and many actual sins of ignorance, of omission, and infirmity, which they nevertheless acknowledge, lament, and strive against, so that they do not lose a good conscience, nor a sense of the divine forgiveness. There are also some who fall into errors which oppose the very foundation of their faith, or who sin against conscience, on account of which they lose the consciousness of their acceptance with God, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, who, were they to continue therein to the end of their lives, would be condemned, and rejected of God; but they do not perish, for the reason that they are led to see the error of their ways, and thus brought to repentance.

There is, however, a threefold distinction between the righteous and the wicked when they sin. 1. God has an eternal purpose to save all those whom he calls into his service. 2. When the righteous sin they are brought to repentance at some time or other before the end of life. 3. When those who have been regenerated fall into sin the seed of their regeneration always remains, which is sometimes so strong and vigorous as to resist sin to such an extent that they neither fall into errors that subvert the foundation of their hope, nor into reigning sin; at other times it is less vigorous and active, so that it may for a time be suppressed by temptations, yet it will at length authenticate its divine character, so that none of those who have been truly converted to God will finally fall away and perish; as we may see in the case of David, of Peter, &c. But when the unregenerate sin the case is wholly different, for none of these things have respect to them.

IV. What are the Causes of Sin?

That God is not the cause of sin, is proven, 1. From the testimony of Scripture: "God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good." "Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness." (Gen. 1: 31. Ps. 5: 4.) 2. God himself is supremely and perfectly good and holy, and cannot therefore be the author of evil. 3. God forbids all manner of sin in his law. 4. God punished most severely all sin, which he could not consistently do if it had its origin in him. 5. God would not destroy his own image in man. From these considerations it is evident that the origin of sin is not to be attributed to God.

But the proper, and in itself efficient cause of sin, is the will of devils and men, by which they freely fell from God, and deprived themselves of his image. "Through envy the devil brought death into the world." (Wisd. 2: 24.) But death is the punishment of sin. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it." "He that committeth sin is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." "By one man sin entered into the world." (John 8: 44. 1 John 3: 8. Rom. 5: 12.)

The cause, therefore, of the first sin, or of the fall of our first parents in Paradise, was the devil tempting and urging man to sin; and the will of man freely separating itself from God, and falling in with the suggestions of the tempter. This fall of Adam is the efficient cause of *original sin* both in himself and in his posterity. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." The preceding cause of *all actual sins* in posterity, is original sin. "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." (Rom. 7: 17. James 1: 14.) Those objects which entice men to sin may be regarded as accidental or casual motives. "Sin, taking occasion by the commandments, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." (Rom. 7: 8.) The devil and wicked men are the cause of sin in and of themselves. Preceding actual sins are the causes of those which follow, for the Scriptures teach that God punishes sin with sin, and that sins which follow are the punishments of those that precede: "God gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts; working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." "Therefore God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." (Rom. 1: 24, 27. 2 Thes. 2: 11.) But as man in his wisdom (so great is his insolence) is accustomed to frame various arguments, for the purpose of throwing the cause of sin from himself upon God, and so free himself from blame, we must speak more fully of the causes of sin, and refute the vain pretences by which men are wont to justify themselves.

There are some who pretend to find the origin of sin in their destiny, as revealed by the stars, saying, We have sinned because we were born under an unlucky planet. Others, when rebuked for their sins, reply, Not we, but the devil is the cause of the wicked deeds we have committed. Others, throwing aside all excuses, cast the blame directly upon God, saying, God willed it thus; for if he had not willed it, I had not sinned. Others, again, say, in extenuation of their sins, God was able to prevent me from doing that which was wrong, and as he did not restrain me, therefore, he himself is the author of my sin.

With these, and similar pretences, men have often, (for it is no new thing,) sharpened their blasphemous tongues against God. Our first parents, when they had sinned, and God charged their crime upon them, endeavored to throw the blame of their wicked deed from themselves upon others, nor did they honestly confess the truth. Adam threw it, not so much upon his wife, as upon God himself. "The woman, said he, whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat;" as if he would say, I had not sinned, except thou hadst joined her to me. (Gen. 3: 12.) The woman charged the evil deed wholly to the devil, saying, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." (Gen. 3: 13.)

These are the false, impious, and detestable conclusions of wicked men in regard to the origin of sin, by which great reproach is cast upon the majesty, truth, and justice of God. Nor is the nature of man the cause of sin, because God created it good, according as it is said: "God saw all things which he had made, and behold it was very good." (Gen. 1: 31.) Sin is an adventitious, or accidental quality, which attaches itself to man in consequence of the fall, and not a substantial property; although it became natural after the fall, and is called so correctly by Augustin,

because we are now all born in sin, and are the children of wrath, even as others. But these things must be more largely considered.

1. Those who would make *destiny* an excuse for their sins, define destiny to mean an order, or chain linked together through eternity, and a certain perpetual necessity of purposes, and works, according to the counsel of God, or the evil stars themselves. Now if you ask them, Who made these stars? they reply, God. Therefore, these men charge their sins upon God. But such a destiny as this, all the wiser (not to speak of christian) philosophers unite in rejecting.

Augustin, in opposing two epistles of the Pelagians to Boniface, says, "*Those who affirm destiny to be the cause of sin, contend that not only actions and events, but also our wills themselves, depend upon the position of the stars at the time of every one's conception, or birth, which they call constellations. But the grace of God does not only rise above all the stars and all the heavens, but also above all the angels.*"

We may conclude our remarks in reference to this vain pretence, by adducing the word of the Lord, as uttered by the Prophet Jeremiah, ch. 10, ver. 2: "Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of the heavens, for the heathen are dismayed at them." That the heathen astrologers should, therefore, call the planet Saturn unmerciful, rigid and cruel; and Venus benignant, favorable, and mild, is the vanity of vanities; for the stars have no power of doing good or evil; and hence the crimes of wicked men ought never to be attributed to them.

2. That the devil is not the sole author of sin, who, when we are guilty of transgression, should alone bear the blame, and we be free from censure, is evident from this one consideration, that he can only suggest and entice men to do that which is evil; but cannot compel them to commit it. God so restrains the devil, by his power, that he cannot do what he desires; but only what, and as much as, God permits. Yea, he has not so much as control over filthy swine, much less over the most noble souls of men. He has, indeed, subtlety and great power of persuasion; but God is more powerful than satan, and never ceases to suggest good thoughts to man, nor does he permit the devil to go farther than is for our good. This we may see in the case of Job, that most holy man, and also in Paul, and in those words of his: "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." (1 Cor. 10: 13.) They reason falsely, therefore, who attempt to throw the blame of their sins upon the shoulders of Satan.

3. It remains to be demonstrated that God is not the author of sin. There are some who argue: *God willed it thus, and if he had not willed it, we had not sinned. Who can resist his power?* Again: *When God had the power to prevent us from sinning, and did not, he is the author of our sins.* These are the cavils, the foul slanders, and sophisms of the wicked. God might, indeed, by his absolute power, prevent evil; but he will not wrong and despoil his own creature, man, whom he created righteous and holy. He acts with man in a manner that corresponds with the nature with which he has endowed him. Hence he proposes laws to which he attaches rewards and punishments — he commands us to embrace the good and shun the evil; and that we may do this, he both grants his grace, without which we can do nothing, and also encourages our diligence and

labor. But if a man come short of doing what he ought, his sin and negligence are chargeable upon himself, and not upon God, although God had the power to prevent it, and yet did not. Nor is it proper that God should prohibit, in any direct manner, the evil deeds of the wicked, lest by so doing, he should disturb the order which he has established, and so destroy his own work. Hence, God is not the author of sin, or of evil.

We shall now give the testimony of the Scriptures in reference to this subject — refute certain objections, and investigate the origin of sin..

The Scriptures, in many places, teach that God is not the author of sin. We can merely refer to a few passages bearing upon this point. "God made not death, nor hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living." "I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." "Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight." "God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions." "Our unrighteousness commends the righteousness of God." "By one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin." "I know that in me dwelleth no good thing." (Wisd. 1: 13. Ez. 18: 23. Ps. 5: 4,5. Ecc. 7: 29. Rom. 3: 5; 5: 12; 7: 18.)

From these express declarations of Scripture, we may safely conclude, that God is not the author of sin; but that its origin must be traced to man, the devil being the instigator; yet in such a manner, that we may say, the devil who became corrupt from the beginning, deprived man of his original holiness, which, however, he could not have done, had not man of his own free will consented to the evil. Here it is necessary for us to revert to the fall of our father Adam, whom God created in his own image by which we mean that he created him good, perfect, holy, just, and immortal, and furnished him with the most excellent gifts, so that nothing was wanting to his full and perfect enjoyment. His understanding was fully enlightened; his will was most free and holy; he had the power of doing good, or evil; and had the law which directed him what to do, and what to avoid; for the Lord said, "Thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Gen. 2: 17.) God demanded simple obedience and faith, that Adam might depend wholly upon him, and that not constrainedly, as if he were compelled thereto by some necessity; but freely and cheerfully. "God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his counsel, saying, If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandment, and perform acceptable faithfulness." (Eccl. 15: 14.) When the serpent, therefore, tempted man, and persuaded him to taste of the forbidden tree, he was not ignorant that the counsel and device of the serpent was contrary to the command of God; for the Lord had said, "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." (Gen. 3: 3.) It was, therefore, in the hand of his counsel to eat, or not to eat. God declared his law, expressly enjoining upon him not to eat, and endeavored to restrain him from eating by foretelling the penalty — "*Lest ye die.*" Nor did Satan use any compulsive measures, (which it was not possible for him to do,) but probably advised, and urged man on, until he at length overcame him by his entreaties; for when the will of the woman inclined to the word of the devil, her mind receded from the word of God, and in rejecting his law, she committed an evil deed. Afterwards she inclined her husband, and drew him along with her, who, by consenting, became a

partaker of her sin. The Scriptures teach this, where it is said, "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." (Gen. 3: 6.)

Here we have the beginning of evil, the devil; and that which moved the will of man, viz: the false praise and commendation of the devil, and therefore, a manifest lie; and the pleasant and attractive appearance of the tree. Hence, Adam and Eve did, of their own choice and free will, what they did, being deceived by the hope of obtaining greater and more excellent wisdom, which the seducer had falsely and deceptiously promised.

We conclude, therefore, that sin had its origin, not in God, who forbids what is evil, but in the devil, and the free choice of man, which was corrupted through the falsehood of Satan. Hence, the devil, and the perverted will of man following him, are to be regarded as the true cause of sin. This evil now flows over from our first parents, into all their posterity, so that sin does not take its rise from any other source, than from ourselves, from our perverted judgment and depraved will, together with the suggestion of the devil. For an evil root, or principle, such as the fall of our first parents, brings forth of itself, a corrupt and rotten branch, corresponding with its own nature, which satan now also by his fraud and lies, cultivates just as plants; but it is all in vain that he should so labor, if we do not offer ourselves to him to be moulded according to his will. That is called original sin which flows from the original fountain, viz: from our first parents, into all their posterity, by propagation, or generation. We bring this sin with us in our nature out of our mother's womb, when we are born into the world. "I was born in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Ps. 51: 7.) And Christ thus speaks of the devil: "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8: 44.)

Obj. 1. Satan was created by God; therefore, his malice must also be from him. Ans. We deny the antecedent. The devil was made satan or an adversary, not by God, for he created him a good angel; but by voluntary apostacy. Hence, it is said that he abode not in the truth, from which we may infer that he must have stood in the truth, prior to his fall.

Obj. 2. God created Adam; and, therefore, the sin of Adam. Ans. There is here a fallacy of accident, in attributing to God the creation of an accidental and accessory evil, in the place of that which is good. Sin is not natural; but it is a corruption of the nature of man, which God created good; for God made man good; but man, by the instigation of the devil, deprived himself of the gifts which he had received from God, and corrupted himself.

Obj. 3. But the will and power which Adam possessed, was from God. Therefore, sin, which is committed by this will, must also be from God. Ans. There is here, again, a fallacy of accident, for the will of Adam was not the cause of sin, in as far as it was from God; but in as far as it of its own accord inclined to the word of the devil. God did not give to man the will and power of doing evil, for he strictly forbade and denounced it in his law. But Adam abused and perverted the will and power which he had received from God, in as much as he did not devote them to the

purposes for which they were given. The prodigal son received money from his father, not that he should waste it in riotous living, but that he might have as much as would be sufficient for his necessity. Wherefore, when he wickedly squandered that which he had received from his father, and was reduced to starvation, it was not the fault of the father from whom he had received it, but it resulted from the abuse of what he had received.

Obj. 4. God made man fallible; nor did he establish him in the goodness in which he created him. Therefore, it was according to his will that man sinned. Ans. The Scriptures rebuke and put to silence this frowardness of men wickedly curious, saying, "Who art thou that repliest against God." "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker." (Rom. 9: 20. Is. 45: 9.) Unless man had been created fallible, there would have been no praise attaching itself to his work, or virtue; for he would have been good from necessity. And what if it had been proper that man should have been thus created? The very nature of God required it to be thus. God does not give his glory to any creature. Adam was a man, and not God. And as God is good, so is he also just. He does good to men, but he wills that they be obedient and grateful to him. He bestowed innumerable benefits upon man; therefore, it behooved him to be thankful, obedient, and subject to God, who has declared, in his law, what would be pleasing to him, and what would not, saying, "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat, lest thou die." (Gen. 2: 17.) As if he would say, thou shalt have respect to me, adhere to me, serve and obey me; thou shalt not ask and seek rules of good and evil from any one else than from me; thou shalt thus show thyself obedient to me.

To this, it is objected: God foreknew the fall of man, which he might have prevented, if he had not willed it; but he did not prevent it. Therefore, Adam sinned by the will and fault of God. Ans. An answer has already been returned to this objection; yet we may remark, in addition to what we have said, that it does not necessarily follow from the foreknowledge of God, that man was compelled to fall. A certain wise father did, from some particular signs, foresee that his degenerate son, at some subsequent time, would be thrust through with a sword; nor does his fore knowledge deceive him; for he is slain for fornication. But no one believes that he is thus slain because the father foresaw that he would come to a miserable end; but because he is a fornicator. Ambrose thus speaks of the murder of Cain: "*God certainly foreknew to what his rage would lead him when excited and exasperated; yet he was not on this account urged to the deed which he perpetrated by the exercise of his own will, as by a necessity, to sin; because, in his foreknowledge, God cannot be deceived.*" And Augustin says: "*God is a just revenger of those things of which he is not the wicked perpetrator.*"

V. What are the Effects of Sin?

Having defined and considered *what sin is, and whence it proceeds*, we are now prepared to investigate the effects which necessarily follow the transgression of the divine law; a knowledge of which is of great importance to a proper understanding of the magnitude of the evil of sin. These effects are temporal and eternal punishments; and because God often punishes sins with sins, subsequent transgressions may be said to be the effects

of preceding sins. (Rom. 1: 24. 2 Thes. 2: 11. Matt. 13: 12.) That this may be the better understood, the following explanations are especially necessary.

1. Original sin, or the depravity of the entire nature of man, or the destruction of the image of God in man, in the sense in which we have explained it, is the effect of the fall of our first parents in Paradise. (Rom. 5: 19.)

2. All actual sins are the effects of original sin. "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." (Rom. 7: 17.)

3. All subsequent actual sins are the effects of preceding ones, and an increase of them; since, according to the just judgment of God, men often run from one sin into another, as Paul teaches concerning the Gentiles, in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans.

4. The sins of other men are also frequently the effects of actual sins, inasmuch as many persons are made worse through the reproach and bad examples of others, and are thus enticed and urged on to sin, as it is said: "Evil communications corrupt good manners." (1 Cor. 15: 33.)

5. An evil conscience, and a fear of the judgment of God, invariably and constantly follow the commission of sin. (Rom. 2: 15. Is. 57: 21.)

6. All the various calamities of this life, together with temporal death itself, are the effects of sin: because it is on account of sin that God has inflicted all these things upon the human race, according to the declaration: "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2: 17.)

7. Eternal death is the last and most extreme consequence of sin, in all those who have not been delivered therefrom by the death and merit of Christ: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt." "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." (Deut. 27: 26. Dan. 12: 2. Matt. 25: 41.)

All sins, therefore, whatever may be their character, deserve, in their own nature, eternal death, which is most plainly affirmed in these and similar passages of God's word. "Cursed be he that confirmeth," &c. "Whosoever shall offend in one point, he is guilty of all." "Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." (Deut. 27: 26. James 2: 10. Matt. 5: 26.)

Yet all sins are not equal. They differ according to certain degrees, even in the judgment of God; as it is said: "All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness." "He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Mark 3: 28, 29. John 19: 11.)

So there will also be degrees in the punishments of hell: for the punishments of the lost will be in proportion to the sins which they have committed; although, as it respects the duration of these punishments, all will be eternal. "That servant which knew his Lord's will, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you." (Luke 12: 47. Matt. 11: 22.)

Question 8. Are we then so corrupt that we are wholly incapable of doing any good, and inclined to all wickedness?

Answer. Indeed we are, except we are regenerated by the Spirit of God.

EXPOSITION.

The question of the freedom of the will, or the power of the human will to obey God, and to do that which is good, is intimately connected with the subject of the misery of man, and claims our attention next in order. It is also necessary to know what ability man possessed before the fall, and what he has since, that, having a correct knowledge of the effects of the first sin, we may be the more excited to humility, and to an earnest desire for divine grace and guidance; and also to true gratitude to God. For this doctrine of the liberty of the will, brings us to a consideration, not of the ability and excellence of man, but of his weakness and misery.

OF FREE WILL.

The principal question and object, in this discussion, is, *Whether man can now, in the same way in which he separated himself from God, also return to him by his own strength—accept of the grace that is offered him by God, and recover for himself the position which has been lost by sin? And also, whether the will of man be the chief cause why some are converted, whilst others continue in sin; and why, both among the converted and the unconverted, some are better than others? In a word, whether the will of man be the cause why men do good or evil, whether in this, or in that manner?*

The Pelagians, and others of a similar character, reply to this question, That so much grace is given by God, and left by nature, to all men, that they can of themselves return to God, and obey him: neither are we to seek for any other cause than the will of man, as the reason why some receive and retain, whilst others reject and disregard, divine aid in forsaking sin, and do, after this or that manner, resolve upon and execute their own counsels and deeds.

The Holy Scriptures, however, teach a wholly different doctrine, which, as we understand it, is, that no work acceptable and pleasing to God can be undertaken, and performed by any one, without regeneration and the special grace of the Holy Spirit; neither can there be any more or less good in the counsels and actions of any man, than God of his own free grace chooses to produce in them; nor can the will of any creature be inclined in any other direction than that which seems good to the eternal and gracious counsel of God. And yet all the actions of the created will, both good and bad, are performed freely. That this may be the better understood, let us inquire:

I. *What is freedom of will, or free power of choice?*
II. *What is the distinction which exists between the liberty which is in God, and that which is in his rational creatures, angels and men?*
III. *Is there any freedom of the human will?*
IV. *What kind of freedom of will is there in man; or how many degrees of free-will are there in man, according to his fourfold state?*

I. What is the Freedom of the Will, or Free Power of Choice?

The term freedom, or liberty, sometimes signifies a relation, power or right, be it the ordering or disposing of a person or thing, made by the will of a certain person, or by nature, for the purpose of acting with one's own choice, or from fear according to just laws, or the order which is in harmony with the nature of man; for the purpose of enjoying those benefits which are fit and proper for us, without any prohibition and restraint; and for the purpose of being relieved from enduring the wants and burdens which are not peculiar to our nature. This may be termed a freedom from bondage and misery, and is opposed to slavery. So God is most free, because he is bound to no one: so the Jews and Romans were free, not being bound by foreign governments and burdens: so a state, or city is free from tyranny and servitude, whilst in the enjoyment of civil liberty: so we, being justified by faith, are through Christ freed from the wrath of God, the curse of the law, and the ceremonies instituted by Moses. But this signification of liberty does not properly belong to this discussion of the freedom of the will; because it is evident, and admitted by all, that we are the servants of God, and that the law binds us either to obedience, or punishment. There are also many things which our will chooses freely, which it nevertheless has not the power or ability to perform.

Secondly, freedom is opposed to constraint, and is a quality of the will, or a natural power of an intelligent creature, concurring with the will; that is, it is the power of choosing or refusing, of its own accord, and without any constraint, an object presented by the understanding, the nature of the will remaining the same, and being free to choose this or that, or to defer any action it may see fit, just as a man may be willing to walk, or not to walk. This is to act upon mature deliberation, which is the method of acting peculiar to the will.

This freedom of will belongs to God, angels, and men; and, when considered in relation to them, is called free power of choice. For that is said to be *free* which is endowed with this power, or liberty of willing or not willing, whilst *the power of choice* is the will itself, as it follows or rejects the judgment of the mind in the choice which it makes; for it comprehends both faculties of the mind, viz: the judgment and the will.

Free power of choice is therefore the faculty or power of willing or not willing, of choosing or rejecting an object presented by the understanding, of its own accord, and without any constraint. This faculty is called the *power of choice* in respect to the mind, which presents objects to the will, to be chosen or rejected; and it is called *free* in respect to the will following voluntarily and of its own accord, without any constraint, the judgment of the mind. That is called free which is *voluntary*, and which is opposed to what is *involuntary and constrained*, but not to that which is necessary; for that which is *voluntary* may agree and harmonise with what is *necessary*, but not with what is *involuntary*, as God and the holy angels are *necessarily* good, but not *involuntarily or constrainedly*; but most freely, because they have the beginning and cause of their goodness, which is free will, in themselves. That is said to be *constrained* which has only an external beginning and cause of its own activity, and not, at the same time, one that is also internal, by which it may move itself to act in this or in that manner.

There is, therefore, such a difference between what is *necessary and constrained*, as that which exists between what is general and particular. Whatever is constrained is necessary, but not every thing that is necessary is constrained. Hence there is what is called a double necessity—a necessity of immutability and of constraint. The former may exist with what is voluntary, but the latter cannot.

The same distinction also exists between what is *free and contingent*. Every thing that is free is contingent, but not the opposite. Therefore that which is free is a species of what is contingent, as is also that which is fortuitous and casual.

II. What is the Distinction which exists between the Liberty which is in God and his creatures, Angels and Men?

There are two things common to God and rational creatures as it respects the liberty of the will. *The one* is, that God and intelligent creatures act upon deliberation and counsel, that is, they choose or reject objects by the exercise of the understanding and will. *The other* is, that they choose or reject objects by their own proper and inward activity, without any constraint, which is the same thing as to say that the will being in its own nature capacitated to will the opposite of that which it does will, or to defer acting, inclines of its own accord to that course which it prefers. (Ps. 104: 24; 115: 3. Gen. 3: 6. Is. 1: 19, 20. Matt. 23: 37.)

There are three differences between the liberty which belongs to God and that which belongs to his creatures.

The first relates to the *understanding*. God sees and understands of himself all things in the most perfect manner, from all eternity, without the least ignorance or error of judgment. Creatures, on the other hand, know nothing of themselves, neither do they know all things, nor the same things at all times; but only so much of God, together with his works and will, as he is pleased, at particular times, to reveal unto them. Hence they are ignorant of many things, and often err. The following passages of Scripture confirm this distinction which we have made in regard to the understanding: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels of heaven; but my Father only." "He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding." "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord?" "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight." "He lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (Matt. 24: 36. Dan. 2: 21. Is. 40: 13. Heb. 4: 13. John 1: 9.)

The second distinction holds in *the will*. The will of God is neither governed by, nor dependent upon, any thing beyond or out of itself. The wills of angels and men are indeed the causes of their own actions; yet they are notwithstanding influenced and controlled by the secret counsel and providence of God, in the choice or rejection of objects, whether immediately by God, or through certain instrumentalities, be they good or evil, which God sees fit to employ. It is consequently impossible for them to do any thing contrary to the eternal and immutable counsel of God. Hence the term αυτεξουσιον (which means to be absolutely his own, at his own will, and in his own power), by which the Greek Theologians express

free power of choice, belongs more properly to God, who is perfectly and absolutely at his own control, not being bound to any one; whilst the term εκουσιον (which means voluntary or free) is more correctly used in relation to creatures, and is thus applied in the following passages of Scripture: (Phil. 5: 14. Heb. 10: 26. 1 Pet. 5: 2.) The various arguments and testimonies from the word of God, by which this distinction is established, will be presented at large when we come to the consideration of the doctrine of the providence of God.

That God, however, is indeed the first cause of his counsels, these and similar declarations of his word plainly affirm: "He hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." "Who doeth according to his own will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." (Ps. 115: 3. Dan. 4: 35.) That the will and counsels of creatures depend upon the permission and will of God, may be proven by the following and similar passages of holy writ: "The Lord shall send his angel before thee," &c. "Go and gather the children of Israel together," &c. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." "But God hath fulfilled those things," &c. "Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord." (Gen. 24: 7. Ex. 3: 16. Acts 2: 23; 3: 17; 4: 27. Jer. 10: 23. Prov. 21: 1.) The will, therefore, of angels and men, and all other second causes, are in like manner governed by God, as they are from him, as their first and chief cause. But the will of God is ruled by none of his creatures, because as he has no efficient cause out of himself, so he has no moving or inclining cause; otherwise he would not be God, the first and great cause of all his works, and creatures would be substituted in the place of God. God does not constrain and force, but moves and directs the will of his creatures; in other words, he effectually inclines the will by presenting objects to the mind, to choose that which the understanding at the time judges to be good, and to reject what it conceives to be evil.

The third distinction holds *in the understanding and will at the same time*. God, as he knows all things unchangeably, so he has also decreed them from everlasting, and wills unchangeably all things which are done in as far as they are good, and permits them in as far as they are sins. But as the notions and judgment which creatures form of things are changeable, so their wills are also changeable. They will that which before they would not, and refuse to choose that which they formerly delighted in. And still further, as all the counsels of God are most good, just and wise, he never disapproves of them; neither does he correct or change them, as men often do, when they perceive that they have unwisely decided upon any thing. These declarations of Scripture are here in point: "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the Son of man, that he should repent." "I am the Lord, I change not." "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much," &c. (Num. 23: 19. Mal. 3: 6. Rom. 9: 22.)

Obj. 1. He who cannot change his counsel has no free will. God cannot change his counsel. Therefore his will is not free. Ans. We reply to the first proposition of this syllogism by making a distinction: it is not he who cannot change his purpose that has no liberty of will, but he who cannot change his counsel, being hindered by some external cause, although he might wish to change it. But God does not change his counsel, neither can he change it; not, however, on account of any hinderance arising from some external cause, nor on account of any imperfection of nature or ability, but because he does not will, neither can he will a change of his counsel, on account of the immutable rectitude of his will, in which no error nor any cause of change can possibly exist.

Obj. 2. That which is governed and ruled by the unchangeable will of God does not act freely. The will of angels and men acts freely. Therefore it is not ruled, nor bound in the choice which it makes, by the unchangeable will of God. Ans. It is necessary here again, in answering the above objection, to make the following distinction with reference to the major proposition: He who is so ruled and controlled by the will of God as to act without any deliberation and choice of his own, does not act freely; but it is not in this way that God influences the will of angels and men. He presents objects to the understanding, and through these effectually moves and inclines the will, so that although they choose that which God wills, they nevertheless do it from their own deliberation and choice, and therefore act freely. Hence creatures may be said to act freely, not when they disregard every form of government and restraint, but when they act with deliberation, and when the will chooses or rejects objects by its own free exercise, even though it may be excited and controlled by some one else.

Obj. 3. If the will, when God changes it, and directed it upon other objects, cannot resist, it is wholly passive. But this involves us in error. Therefore the will cannot be thus influenced and controlled. Ans. The conclusion here drawn is incorrect, in as much as there is not a sufficiently full and distinct enumeration in the major proposition of those exercises and actions of which the will is capable; for it may not only resist the influence which God brings to bear upon it, but it has the ability also, by its own proper determination, to obey God, and to assent to the suggestions and influences of his spirit. In doing this, however, it is not only passive, but also active, and performs its own actions, although the power of assenting and obeying is not from itself, but from the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Obj. 4. That which resists the will of God is not governed by it. The will of man opposes and resists God in many things. Therefore it is not governed by him. Ans. There are here four terms. The major proposition is true, if it be understood as including both the secret and revealed will of God; the minor, however, merely expresses the will of God as expressed or revealed, for the secret decrees of God's will are always ratified and performed in all, even in those who most violently resist the commandments of God.

Obj. 5. If all the determinations, including even those of the wicked, are excited and ruled by the will of God, and if many of these are sinful, then God seems to be the author of sin. Ans. There is here a fallacy of

accident in the minor proposition, for the determinations of the wicked are sins, not in as far as they are ordained and proceed from the will of God (for so far they are good, and agree with the divine law), but in as far as they are from devils and men, who in acting either do not know the will of God, or do not perform it with the design that they may thus obey and glorify God.

III. Is there any Freedom of the Human Will?

That there is in man a certain freedom of will, is proven: 1. From the fact that man was created in the image of God, of which free will constituted a part: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "God made man in the beginning, and left him in the hand of his counsel." (Gen. 1: 26. Eccl. 15: 14.) 2. From the definition of the freedom which belongs to man; for man acts upon deliberation, freely knowing, and desiring or rejecting this or that object. If this definition, now, correspond with the nature of man, the thing which is expressed and defined by it must also belong to him.

Obj. 1. If man be in the possession of freedom of will, the doctrine of original sin is overthrown; for it is a contradiction to say that man is not able to obey God, and to affirm, at the same time, that he has liberty of will. Ans. There is no real opposition in what is here affirmed, because since the fall man has liberty of will only in part, and not such as he had before the fall, nor to the same degree.

Obj. 2. He who has not a will to choose in like manner the good and the evil, does not possess free-will. But man, since the fall, has not a will to choose equally the good and the evil. Therefore he does not possess freedom of will. Ans. We reject the major proposition, because it contains an incorrect definition of liberty; for, according to it, God himself does not possess any liberty of will.

Obj. 3. That which is dependent upon another is not free. Our will is dependent upon another. Therefore it is not free. Ans. We reply to the major proposition, by making the following distinction: That which is dependent upon and ruled by another, and not by itself also, is not free. The will of man, however, is ruled not only by another, but also by itself; for God influences men in such a manner, that they are not constrained and carried along involuntarily, but most freely; so that it may be said that they move themselves. The being or will which is moved only by itself, belongs to God alone, of whom infinite liberty may more correctly be predicated, than of creatures. In the mean while, however, it may be sufficient, as far as it respects the liberty which belongs to man, to affirm, that whatever he wills, he wills freely, and by his own proper determination.

Obj. 4. That which is enslaved is not free. Our power of choice is enslaved since the fall. Therefore it is not free. Ans. The whole argument is conceded, if by *free* we understand that which has the power of choosing that which is good and pleasing to God: for thus far the will is held in bondage, and can only will and choose that which is evil. "I am carnal, sold under sin," &c. (Rom. 7: 14.) But if by *free* we understand voluntary, or deliberative, then the major proposition is false; for it is not the subjection, but the constraint of the will, that takes away its liberty.

IV. What kind of Liberty of Will has Man; or how many Degrees of Free-Will are there, according to Man's four-fold state?

It is still further to be inquired, in the discussion of this subject, (and this is also necessary, in order that we may arrive at a proper knowledge of ourselves,) *What, and how great*, was the liberty of will which man possessed before the fall? Whether *there be any, or none at all*, since the fall? And if any, *what is it? Whether it be restored in us; in what manner, and how far?* Wherefore it is evident that the degrees of free-will may be considered, and distinguished most correctly, according to the four-fold state of man, viz: as not yet fallen into sin — as fallen — as regenerated — and as glorified; that is, what kind, and how great, was the freedom of the human will before the fall? What is this freedom since the fall, and before regeneration? What is it in those who are regenerated? And what will it be in the life to come, in a state of glorification?

The first degree of liberty is that which belonged to man before the fall. This consisted in a mind enlightened with the perfect knowledge of God, and a will yielding entire obedience to God by its own voluntary act and inclination; and yet not so confirmed in this knowledge and obedience, but that it might fall by its own free exercise, if the appearance of any good were presented for the purpose of deceiving, and effecting a fall; — that is, the will of man was free to choose good and evil, or it might freely choose the good, but in such a manner that it might also choose the evil: it might continue to stand in the good, being preserved by God, and it might also incline and fall over to the evil, if forsaken of God. *The former* is confirmed by a consideration of the perfection of the image of God in which man was created. *The latter* is evident from the event itself, and from the following testimonies of Scripture: "God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions." "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." (Eccl. 7: 29. Rom. 11: 32.) In the last passage just quoted, Paul testifies that God, with profound wisdom, did not place the first man beyond the reach of a fall; nor did he give him such a measure of grace, that he might not be seduced by the temptation of the devil, and be persuaded to sin; but he permitted him to be seduced, and to fall into sin and death, that all those who would be saved from this general ruin might be saved by his mercy alone. It is also proven by this plain argument: that if nothing can be done without the eternal and most wise counsel of God, then surely the fall of our first parents, least of all, could be excluded therefrom, inasmuch as God had fully determined, from the very beginning, what he would have done, as regards the human race — the most important part of the work of creation. Those things which the wisdom of man is accustomed to bring forward against what has here been advanced, may be found in Ursini vol. i. p. 242, &c.

The second degree of free power of choice is that which belongs to man as a fallen being, born of corrupt parents, and unregenerated. In this state the will does indeed act freely, but it is disposed and inclined only to that which is evil, and can do nothing but sin. And the reason is, because the fall was followed by a privation of the knowledge of God, and of all inclinations to obedience; and because this has been succeeded by an ignorance of, and an aversion to God, from which man cannot be delivered

unless he be regenerated by the Holy Spirit. *In short*, there is in man, since the fall, in his unregenerate state, a proneness to choose only that which is evil. In view of this ignorance and corruption of human nature since the fall, it is said: "Every thought of man's heart is evil continually." "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, and the leopard his spots," &c. "Every man from his youth is given to evil, and their stony hearts cannot become flesh." "We were dead in trespasses and in sins; and were by nature the children of wrath." "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves." (Gen. 6: 5. Jer. 13: 23. Syr. 17: 13. Eph. 2: 1, 3. Matt. 7: 18. 2 Cor. 3: 6.) With these explicit testimonies, gathered from the word of God, every man's experience fully harmonizes: as may also be said to be true of the sense of conscience, which declares that we have no liberty and inclination of will to do that which is good; but in the place of this, a great proneness to do that which is evil, so long as we are not regenerated; as it is said: "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned." (Jer. 31: 18.) It is, therefore, clearly evident that the love of God is in no one by nature; and hence no one, in this state, has a propensity or inclination to serve God.

Obj. 1. *There is nothing easier* (said Erasmus to Luther) *than to restrain the hand from theft.* And still further: Socrates, Aristides, and many others, performed many excellent things, and were adorned with many virtues; therefore there was in them, before regeneration, a power of choice that was free to do that which was good. Ans. This is an imperfect definition of free power of choice, and of what constitutes a good work; or of liberty to do that which is good, which is the power of rendering such obedience as is acceptable to God. This the unregenerate have not. And although they may refrain from theft, as far as the external act is concerned, yet they are guilty of it as it respects the desires and tendencies of the heart. And not only so, but this external propriety itself, of which so much account is made, is to be attributed to God, who by his providence controls the hearts even of the wicked, and restrains them from those outbreaks of sin to which they are naturally inclined. Yet it would be wrong to conclude from this that it is easy for them to commence that true internal obedience which is pleasing to God. Such obedience can only be rendered by those who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

Obj. 2. The works which are prescribed and enjoined by the law are good. The heathen perform many of these works. Therefore, their works are good, although they have not been regenerated; and, as a matter of consequence, they must possess liberty to choose the good. Ans. We reply to this objection by making the following distinction: The works prescribed and enjoined by the law are good, considered in themselves; but they become evil, by an accident, when they are done by those who are not regenerated; because they are not done in the manner, nor with the design which God requires.

Obj. 3. What God desires us to do, we have the power of doing. God desires us to do that which contributes to our well-being. Therefore, we have the ability, of ourselves, to do that which is good, and consequently do not need the grace and influence of the Holy Spirit. Ans. There is in this syllogism, an incorrect chain of reasoning, arising from the ambi

guity of the word *desire*. In the major, it is used in its ordinary and proper sense. But in the minor, it is used improperly; for God is here said to desire, through a figure of speech, by which he is represented as being affected after the manner of men. Hence, there is a different kind of affirmation in the major from what there is in the minor. God desires in two respects. First, in respect to his commandments and invitations. Secondly, in respect to the love which he cherishes towards his creatures, and the torments of those that perish, but not in respect to the execution of his justice. Reply. He who invites others to do that which is good, and rejoice in their well-doing, declares that it is in their power to do this, and not in the power of him who invites. But God invites us to do that which is good, and approves of our conduct when we thus act. Therefore, it is in our power to do the good. Ans. We deny the minor proposition; because it is not sufficient for God to invite. It is also necessary that our wills consent to do the good, which they will not do unless God incline them.

Obj. 4. If we can do nothing but sin before our regeneration, God seems to punish us unjustly. Ans. He who sins of necessity is punished unjustly, unless he has brought this necessity of sinning upon himself. We are, therefore, justly punished, because we have brought this necessity of sinning upon ourselves, in our first parents, and follow their example by doing the same things. Other objections, which are ordinarily brought forward by the advocates of free-will, may be seen in Ursini vol. i. page 245.

The third degree of free power of choice is that which belongs to a man as regenerated, but not as yet perfected and glorified. In this state the will uses its liberty, not only for doing that which is evil, as is true of man before his regeneration, but here the will does both the good and the evil in part. *It does that which is good*, because the Holy Spirit, by his special grace, has renovated the nature of man through the Word of God — has kindled new light and knowledge in the understanding, and has awakened in the heart and will such new desires and inclinations, as are in harmony with the divine law; and because the Holy Spirit effectually inclines the will to do those things which are in accordance with this knowledge, and with these desires and inclinations. It is in this way that the will recovers both the power of willing that which is acceptable to God, and the use of this power, so that it commences to obey God according to these declarations of his word: "The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart." "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." (Deut. 30: 6. Ex. 36: 26. 2 Cor. 3: 17. 1 John 3: 9.) The reasons, on account of which the will in this third degree chooses and does in part both the good and the evil, are the following: 1. Because the mind and will of those who are regenerated, are not fully and perfectly renewed in this life. There are many remains of depravity which cleave to the best of men, as long as they continue in the flesh, so that the works which they perform are imperfect, and defiled with sin. "I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." (Rom. 7: 18.) 2. Because those who are regenerated are not always governed by the Holy Spirit; but are sometimes forsaken of God for a season, that he may thus either try, or

humble them. Yet although they are thus left to themselves for a time, they do not finally perish, for God, in his own time and way, calls them to repentance. "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." "O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear. Return, for thy servant's sake." (Ps. 51: 13. Is. 63: 17.) In short, after regeneration is begun in man, there is a proneness to choose partly the good, and partly the evil. There is a proneness *to the good*, because the mind and will being illuminated and changed, begin, in some measure, to be turned to the good, and to commence new obedience. There is a proneness *to the evil*, because the saints are only imperfectly renewed in this life — retain many infirmities and evil desires, on account of original sin, which still cleaves to them. Hence the good works which they perform are not perfectly good. Those things which the Anabaptists, and others of a similar character, are accustomed to bring forward against what is here said of the imperfection of the holiness and good works of the righteous, may be seen on the 256th page of the same volume of Ursinus to which we have before referred, and also in the exposition of the 114th Question of the Catechism.

The fourth degree of free power of choice, is that which belongs to man after this life, in a state of glorification; or as perfectly regenerated. In this state, the will of man will be free to choose only the good, and not the evil. This will be the highest degree, or the perfect liberty of the human will, when we shall obey God fully and forever. In this state we shall not only not sin, but we will abhor it above every thing else; yea, we shall then no longer be able to sin. In proof of this we may adduce the following reasons: First, the perfect knowledge of God will then shine in the mind, whilst there will be the strongest and most ardent desire of the will and heart to obey God; so that there will be no room left for ignorance or doubt, or the least contempt of God. Secondly, in the life to come, the saints will never be forsaken, but will be constantly and forever ruled by the Holy Spirit, so that it will not be possible for them to deviate in the smallest respect from that which is right. Hence it is said: "They are as the angels of God in heaven." "We shall be like him." (Matt. 22: 30. 1 John 3: 2.) The good angels are inclined only to that which is good, because they are good; just as the bad angels, on the other hand, are inclined only to that which is evil, because they are evil. But we shall be like the good angels. Our condition will, therefore, be one of far greater excellence than that of Adam before the fall. Adam was, indeed, perfectly conformed to God; but he had the power to will both the good and the evil; and therefore, with all his gifts, he had a certain infirmity, viz: the possibility to fall from God, and to lose his gifts. He was changeably good. But we shall not be able to will any thing but the good. Just as the wicked are inclined and led to do evil only, because they are wicked; so we shall be inclined to that which is good, and love and choose it alone, because we shall be unchangeably good. We shall then be so fully established in righteousness and conformity to God, that it will not be possible for us to fall from him; yea, it will then be impossible for us to will any thing that is evil, because we shall be preserved by divine grace in that state of perfect liberty in which the will will choose the good only.

From these things which we have now said in relation to human freedom, it is manifestly a foul slander to say that we take away the liberty of

the will. And although those who are renewed and glorified will not be able to will any thing but the good, after their glorification; yet their power of choice will then be free to a much greater extent than it now is; for God, also, cannot will any thing but the good, and yet he possesses perfect freedom of will. So on the other hand, we do not take away the power of choice from the ungodly, or such as are unregenerated, when we affirm that they are not able to will any thing but that which is evil; for they will and choose the evil freely — yea, most freely. Their will is inclined and carried with the greatest impetuosity, to evil only; because they continually retain in their hearts, hatred to God. Hence, all the works which they perform of an external moral character, are evil in the sight of God, as we have already shown in our remarks upon the doctrine of sin. So much concerning the free power of choice which belongs to man.

FOURTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 9. Doth not God then do injustice to man, by requiring from him, in his law, that which he cannot perform?

Answer. Not at all: for God made man capable of performing it; but man, by the instigation of the devil, and his own willful disobedience, deprived himself and all his posterity of those divine gifts.

EXPOSITION.

There is here in this portion of the Catechism, an objection on the part of human reason against what is said in the preceding question: If man is so corrupt that he cannot do any thing that is good before his regeneration, then God seems unjustly and in vain to require from him, in his law, perfect obedience. The objection may be more fully stated thus: He who requires or commands that which is impossible, is unjust. God requires of man in his law perfect obedience, which it is impossible for him to perform. Therefore, God seems to be unjust. To this objection we reply as follows: He who requires what is impossible is unjust, unless he first gave the ability to perform what he requires; secondly, unless man covet, and has of his own accord brought this inability upon himself; and, lastly, unless the requirement, which it is not possible for man to comply with, be of such a nature as is calculated to lead him to acknowledge, and deplore his inability. But God, by creating man in his own image, gave him the ability to render that obedience which he justly requires from him in his law. Wherefore if man, by his own fault and free will, cast away this ability with which he was endowed, and brought himself into a state in which he can no longer render full obedience to the divine law, God has not for this reason lost his right to exact the obedience which man is in duty bound to render him. God therefore justly punishes us, because we have cast away this good by transgressing his commandments, and because he threatened punishment in case his law were violated.

Obj. 1. But we did not bring this sin upon ourselves. Ans. Our first parents, when they fell, lost this ability both for themselves, and all their posterity; just as they also received it for themselves and their posterity.

If a prince were to give a nobleman a fee and he were to rebel against him, he would lose it not only for himself, but for his posterity also; and the prince would do no injustice to his children by not restoring to them that which was lost by the rebellion of their father. And if he does restore it, it is because of his goodness and mercy.

Obj. 2. He that commands impossibilities, commands in vain. God commands that which it is impossible for man to perform since the fall. Therefore he commands in vain. Ans. 1. God does not command in vain, even though we do not perform what he enjoins upon us, because his commandments have other ends in view, both as it respects the righteous and the wicked. The righteous are required to obey the commands of God, 1. That they may acknowledge their own weakness and inability. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." 2. That they may know what they were before the fall. 3. That they may know what they ought most especially to ask of God, viz, the renewal of their nature. 4. That they may understand what Christ has done in our behalf — that he has made satisfaction for us, and regenerates us. 5. That we may commence new obedience to God, because the law teaches us how we ought to act towards God, in view of the benefits of redemption; and what God, in return, requires of us. Obedience is required from the wicked, 1. That the justice of God may be manifest in their condemnation: because if they know what they ought to do, and yet do it not, they are justly condemned. "That servant which knew his Lord's will, and did not according to it, shall be beaten with many stripes." (Luke 12: 47.) 2. That external propriety, and discipline may be preserved. 3. That those whom God designs to save may be converted. We reply, in the *second* place, to the major proposition of this syllogism by making the following distinction: He who commands impossibilities, does indeed command in vain, unless he at the same time gives the ability. But God, in commanding the elect, gives them the power also to obey, and commences obedience in them by the gospel, and ultimately perfects it. Augustine says: "*Lord, give what thou dost command, and command what thou wilt, and thou shalt not command in vain.*" (De bono persever. cap. 10.) This impossible demand is, therefore, the greatest benefit; because it leads us to the attainment of the power through which we may comply with what is required of us.

Question 10. Will God suffer such disobedience and rebellion to go unpunished?

Answer. By no means, but is terribly displeased with our original as well as actual sins; and will punish them in his just judgment temporally and eternally, as he hath declared, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

EXPOSITION.

In the exposition of this Question, we must consider the evil of punishment, which is the other part of the misery of man. In relation to this we are taught that God punishes sin most severely, justly, and certainly. He punishes it *most severely*, that is, with present and eternal punishment, on

account of its enormity and greatness, because it is an offence against the infinite good. *Most justly*, because every sin, even the smallest transgression, is a violation of the law of God; and, therefore, according to the order of divine justice, deserves eternal punishment and banishment from God. *Most certainly*, because God is true, and does not change the sentence which the law denounces: "Cursed is he that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. 3: 6.)

Obj. 1. But the wicked often prosper in this life, and do many things with impunity. Therefore all sins are not punished. Ans. They will at length be punished: yea they are even in this life punished, 1. In the conscience, by whose stings the wicked are tortured. 2. Also, in those things which they use with the greatest eagerness and delight; and the less they know, and acknowledge themselves to be punished, so much the heavier it is. 3. They are also often afflicted with other grievous punishments. And yet their punishment will be still more dreadful in the life to come, where it will be everlasting death.

Obj. 2. God did not create evil, and death. Therefore he will not punish sin so severely. Ans. He did not, indeed, create them in the beginning; yet when sin was committed he inflicted death, in his just judgment, upon sinners, according to the threatening: "Thou shalt surely die!" (Gen. 2: 17.) Wherefore it is likewise said: "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos 3: 6.)

Obj. 3. If God punish sin with present, and everlasting punishment, he punishes the same offence twice, and is unjust. But he is not unjust; neither does he punish the same offence twice. Therefore he will not punish with present and everlasting punishment. Ans. We deny the major proposition; for the punishment which God inflicts upon the wicked in this, and in the life to come, is but one punishment, although it consists of several parts. Present punishment is but the beginning of everlasting punishment. Neither is it separate, or complete in itself, because it is not sufficient to satisfy the justice of God.

Obj. 4. Sins which are different in their character are not punished with an equal punishment. Therefore all sins are not punished with eternal punishment. Ans. There is more in the conclusion than in the premises. This is all that legitimately follows; therefore all sins are not punished with equal punishment, which is true. But all sins, even the smallest, deserve eternal punishment, because all offend the infinite and eternal good. Hence all sins are punished equally as to duration, but not as to the degrees of punishment. Great sins will be punished eternally, with severe punishment, whilst smaller ones will be punished eternally, with lighter punishment.

Obj. 5. But if God punish sin with eternal punishment, then all of us must either perish, or else the justice of God is not satisfied. Ans. It is true, indeed, that if God were to punish sin in us, we would all necessarily perish for ever. But he does not punish sin in us with eternal punishment; and yet his justice does not suffer on this account, because he has made a satisfaction for our sins in Christ, by inflicting upon him a punishment equivalent to that which is eternal. It is in this way that the Gospel satisfies the demands of the law.

Obj. 6. But if God has punished our sins in Christ, he ought not, if he is just, to inflict further punishment upon us; so that the afflictions

of the righteous in this life are unjust. Ans. The afflictions of the righteous are not to be regarded as a punishment or satisfaction for sin; but they are merely the chastisement of a father, sent for the purpose of humbling them. Hence it becomes necessary for us, after we shall have given an exposition of the following question of the catechism, to speak of afflictions.

Question 11. But is not God also merciful?

Answer. God is indeed merciful, but also just; therefore his justice requires that sin, which is committed against the most high majesty of God, be also punished with extreme, that is, with everlasting punishment, both of body and soul.

EXPOSITION.

There is here an objection to what is taught in the preceding question, which affirms, *that God punishes every sin with eternal punishment.* The objection is this: It belongs to him, who is in the highest degree merciful, not to be too rigorous in the demands of his justice. God is in the highest degree merciful; therefore he will not exact all that his extreme justice demands, and so will not punish sin with eternal punishment. To the major proposition we thus reply: It does indeed belong to him, who is merciful, to be lenient in his demands, but not so as to wrong his justice, if he be at the same time extremely just. But God is exceedingly merciful in such a way, that he is also exceedingly just. Hence he will exercise his mercy in such a manner as not to do any violence to his justice. Now, the justice of God demands that sin, which is committed against his most high Majesty, be punished with extreme, that is, with everlasting punishment, both of body and soul, that there may be a proportion between the offence and its punishment. Every crime is great, and deserving of punishment in proportion to the majesty of him against whom it is committed. The following objection demands a passing notice:

Obj. He who rigorously exacts his right, shuts out every expectation of clemency. God rigorously exacts his right. Therefore with him there is no clemency. Or the objection may be thus stated: He who does not yield any thing in relation to his rights, is not merciful, but only just. God does not yield any thing as it respects his rights, because he punishes every sin with a punishment that corresponds with its just desert. Ans. We deny the minor proposition, because God, although he punishes sin with eternal punishment, does nevertheless yield much as it respects his right. He exhibits great clemency, for instance, towards the reprobate, for he defers the punishment which they deserve, and invites them to repentance by strong and powerful motives. And as to the punishment which he will inflict upon them in the world to come, it will be lighter than they deserved. So he also exercises great mercy towards the faithful, for he has, from his mercy alone, without being bound by any law or merit on our part, given his son, and subjected him to punishment for our sake. *We also deny the major proposition*, if applied either to him who is endowed with such wisdom that he can discover a method of exercising mercy without violating his justice, or when applied to him who, whilst he

executes his justice, does not rejoice in the destruction of man, but would rather that he be saved. As a judge, when he passes the sentence upon a robber that he deserves to be put to the torture, and yet does not take pleasure in his punishment, exhibits great equity and clemency, even though he seems to exact the most rigorous demand of the law, so God is far more equitable and clement, although, in his just judgment, he punishes sin, for he does not delight in the destruction of the wicked, (Ez. 18: 23; 33: 11.) and has also shown his mercy and compassion towards us, by laying the punishment which we deserved upon his own Son.

CONCERNING AFFLICTIONS.

There are three questions which particularly claim our attention in regard to afflictions:

I. *How many kinds of afflictions are there?*
II. *What are the causes of them?*
III. *What comforts may be opposed to them?*

I. How many kinds of Afflictions are there?

There are two kinds of afflictions, such as are temporal and such as are eternal. *Eternal*, are those everlasting torments of body and soul which constitute the final portion of devils, and of the wicked who in this life are not converted to God. They are called in the Scriptures, *hell*, *torments*, *unquenchable fire*, *a worm that dieth not*, *and everlasting death*, because they are torments which will be everlasting, and such as are experienced by the dying, who, although they are always dying, will never be dead. This now will be the character of eternal death, always to die, and never to be dead; or it will be a continuation of death, with an infinite increase of hellish agonies and torments. The following are some of the declarations of Scripture which refer to everlasting punishment: "Their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched." "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear." (Is. 66: 24. Mark 9: 43, 44. Matt. 25: 41. 1 Pet. 4: 18.) The reason which makes this form of punishment necessary is evident from this: that sin which is committed against God, who is infinitely good, demands an infinite punishment and satisfaction, which could not be rendered by the afflictions which are incident merely to this life. This would not satisfy the infinite and eternal justice of God.

That eternal punishment includes both the soul and body, is clearly affirmed by Christ himself, when he says: "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10: 28.) The soul is the fountain of sin; whilst the body, as a thing destitute of reason, executes what the soul directs. As the soul and body are, therefore, both involved in the commission of sin, the one being the author and the other the instrument, they will both be included in the punishment thereof.

Obj. He who is most merciful cannot behold the eternal torments of his creatures, much less inflict them. God's mercy is infinitely great, and exceeds our sins; therefore he can neither inflict nor behold eternal torments in his creatures. Ans. This objection is true if it refers merely to a being who is infinitely merciful, without being at the same time infinitely just. But as both of these attributes meet in the character of God, the objection loses its force when applied to him, as we have already shown, in our remarks upon the 11th Question of the Catechism.

Temporal afflictions, such as sickness, poverty, reproach, calumny, oppression, banishment, wars, and the other miseries of this life, together with temporal death itself, are common both to the righteous and the wicked. These afflictions are either punishments, or the cross.

The punishments which are a part of the afflictions of this life, consist in the destruction and sufferings which are inflicted upon those who are guilty of sin. These are peculiar to the reprobate, because they are inflicted upon them for the purpose of making satisfaction to the justice of God. For the law binds all men either to obedience or punishment.

Obj. But the evils which are inflicted upon the wicked in this life, are not sufficient to satisfy the justice of God. Ans. They do not constitute the whole punishment of the wicked. They are only a part of it, and a beginning of that full satisfaction which will be exacted from them through all eternity. Just as every part of the air is called air, so every part of punishment is called punishment.

There are, however, degrees of punishment. The *first degree* is that which pertains to this life; for here already, when conscience chides and reproves, there is a commencement of the gnawings of the worm which shall never die. The *second degree* of punishment is that which is experienced in temporal death, when the wicked begin to feel the wrath of God, as the soul is separated from the body and plunged into the place of hopeless torment. The *third degree* of punishment is that which will be inflicted in the last judgment, when the soul and body will be cast into hell, and everlasting agonies will rush in from every side, as if in torrents, upon the wicked.

The cross comprises those afflictions which are peculiar to the godly, which are not properly punishments, because they are not inflicted for the purpose of making satisfaction to the justice of God. There are four kinds of afflictions included in the cross, and distinguished from each other by their ends.

The *first* comprises those chastisements which God inflicts upon the righteous for their sins, but which are inflicted according to his mercy, as a father corrects his son with much gentleness and toleration. They are, therefore, not properly punishments, but fatherly chastisements, by which the godly are admonished of their impurity, and of their peculiar sins and backslidings — are stirred up to repentance, and so brought back to the path of duty and holiness. Thus David was driven from his kingdom, and banished, on account of his fall: for peculiar sins are followed by peculiar and severe chastisements, even in the saints. These chastisements, however, are not to be regarded as a recompense for sin; but they are the effects of divine justice, through which God designs that we and others should be made acquainted with the rectitude of his character; that he is greatly displeased with sin, and will punish it with death, not only in this, but also in the life to come, unless we repent and return to him.

The *second* form or species of the cross includes the proofs or trials which are made of the faith, hope, patience, &c., of the saints, in order that these virtues may be strengthened and confirmed in them; and also, that their infirmity may be made manifest to themselves and others. Such was the nature of Job's affliction.

The *third* form of the cross is martyrdom, which includes the testimony and witness of the saints concerning the doctrine of the gospel, when they confirm and seal with their blood the doctrine which they professed, by which they declare that it is true — that they themselves experience in death the comfort which they promised to others in their teachings, and that there remains another life, and another judgment after this life.

The cross, *in the last place*, includes ransom, or the obedience of Christ; which is a satisfaction for our sins, and includes the entire humiliation of Christ, from the very moment of his conception to his last agony upon the cross.

A TABLE OF THE AFFLICTIONS OF MAN.

Afflictions are,
- 1. Temporal: some of which belong to
  - The wicked, and are properly punishments for sins.
  - The godly: as the cross which includes
    - Chastisements.
    - Trials.
    - Martyrdom.
    - Ransom.
- 2. Eternal: which include the everlasting torments of the damned.

II. What are the Causes of Afflictions?

The causes of the punishments of the wicked are: 1. Sin, which is the impelling cause. They are made to suffer, that satisfaction may thus be made by a just punishment for their sins. 2. The justice of God, which is the chief efficient cause which inflicts punishment for sin. 3. The instrumental causes are various: they are such as angels and men, both good and bad, and other creatures, all of whom are armed against the sinner, and fight under God's banner.

The causes of the cross which is peculiar to the godly, are:

1. Sin, which, however, is to be viewed differently in the godly from what it is in the wicked. The godly are afflicted on account of sin, not for the purpose of making satisfaction to the justice of God, but that sin may be acknowledged by them, and removed, through the cross. They are paternally chastised, that they may be led to a knowledge of their faults. These chastisements are to them sermons, and call to repentance. "When we are judged we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." God, however, gives loose reigns to the wicked, that they may rush into destruction. He confers upon them the blessings of this life, with a short season of repose and rejoicing, because they are his creatures, that their ingratitude may become apparent, and that he may render them inexcusable. But he corrects and improves the character of the godly through the cross.

2. That we may learn to hate sin, the devil, and the world. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own" "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers." "Love not the world." (John 15: 19. Eph. 6: 12. 1 John 2: 15.)

3. That we may be exercised and tried, that thus our faith, hope, patience, prayer, and obedience, may be strengthened and confirmed; or that we may have matter and occasion for exercising and proving ourselves, and that our faith, hope, and patience, may be made manifest both to ourselves and others. When all things go well, it is an easy thing for us to glory in regard to our faith; but in adversity, the grace or beauty of virtue becomes apparent. He that has not been tempted, what knoweth he? "Experience worketh hope." (Rom. 5: 4.)

4. *The peculiar faults and slidings of the saints.* Manasseh had his peculiar faults; Jehoshaphat had his; and other saints have other failings and sins peculiar to themselves. Hence the chastisements by which God shows that he is also displeased with the sins of the saints, and will avenge them more severely, unless they repent, are various and different. "That servant which knew his Lord's will, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." (Luke 12: 47.)

5. *The exhibition and manifestation of the glory of God* in the deliverance of the church, and of the godly. God often brings his church and people into extreme danger, that the deliverance which he effects may be the more glorious, as was the case with the oppression of the children of Israel in Egypt, and their captivity in Babylon, &c. In these instances the deliverance which God wrought was truly glorious, and gave evidence of his wisdom in discovering a way of escape where no creature could hope for it. "The Lord bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up." (1 Sam. 2: 6.)

6. *The conformity of the members to Christ*, their head in affliction and glory. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." "The servant is not greater than his Lord, nor the disciple above his master." (2 Tim. 2: 12. Rom. 8: 29. Matt. 10: 24.)

7. That the saints, by their sufferings and death, may bear witness to the truth of the doctrine of the gospel: for when the faithful endure every form of suffering, and even death itself for the sake of their profession of Christianity, they give the most satisfactory testimony that they themselves are fully persuaded of its truth, and that they cannot from any consideration be induced to renounce it; and also that it affords them real and solid consolation, even in death itself, and must therefore necessarily be true. It was foretold to Peter *by what death he should glorify God.* (John 21: 19.

8. The afflictions of the godly are *evidences of a judgment to come and of eternal life.* The truth and justice of God both require that it should at length go well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked. This however is not fully the case in this life. Therefore there must be another life after this, in which God will render to every one according to his just deserts. "Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer." (2 Thes. 1: 5.)

Having made these remarks in relation to the afflictions of the godly, we may easily reply to the objection which the men of the world are wont to bring against the providence of God. The church, say they, is oppressed throughout the whole world, and trodden under foot by all men. Therefore it is not the true church, and is not cared for on the part of God. But

this, instead of proving any thing against the church, is rather an argument in its favor: for if the church were of the world, then this opposition and persecution would cease, for the world loves its own. The reasons of the afflictions of the church are therefore manifest; and the end of things will convict and condemn the world.

III. What are the Comforts which we may oppose to our Affliction?

There are some comforts under afflictions which are peculiar to the church, whilst there are others that are common both to the church and philosophy. The first, in connection with the ninth and tenth, which we shall now present are peculiar to the church, whilst the rest are common both to it, and philosophy; and yet whilst it may be said that they are common, it is only as it respects the outward appearance, and not as it regards the matter, or substance of the thing spoken of. These comforts we shall present in the following order:

1. *Remission of sin.* This is the first in order and lies at the bottom of all the rest: because if we have no assurance of the forgiveness of sin, and reconciliation with God, all the other comforts are of no account; for we should then always be in doubt whether the promise of grace belongs to us or not. But if this comfort be well grounded and fixed, all the others will naturally follow; for if God be our father, we may rest assured that he will not only not send any thing that will be an injury to us, but he will also defend us against all the evils of this life. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8: 31.) The reason of all this is, that where the cause is taken away the effect is also removed. Therefore where sin is taken away, punishments and death are also done away with.

2. *The will and providence of God*, or the necessity of obeying God both in adversity and prosperity, because he wills and directs all things. The reason of this consequence of obedience is not only because we are not able to resist him, but more especially, 1. Because he is our Father. 2. Because he is deserving of this obedience from us to such an extent, that we ought to be willing to endure the greatest evils for his sake. 3. Because the evils which he sends are fatherly chastisements. This comfort quiets the mind, inasmuch as it assures us that it is our heavenly Father's will that we should suffer these things. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." (Job 13: 15; 1: 21.) Philosophers tell us that we ought to endure patiently what we cannot alter and avoid. They establish a fatal necessity, and then count it foolish to resist it. But in their calamities they do not submit themselves to God, nor acknowledge his displeasure, nor endure adversity with the design of obeying God; but because they cannot avoid these things. This is miserable comfort.

3. *The excellency of virtue, or obedience to God*, which is true virtue, on account of which the mind should not be cast down under the cross. The temporal blessings which God confers upon us are great benefits; but obedience, faith, hope, &c., are far greater. Therefore it becomes us not to prefer less benefits to those which are greater, nor to cast away the greater for the sake of redeeming the loss of those which are less. "He that loveth

father, or mother, more than me, is not worthy of me." "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it." (Matt. 10, 37; 16, 25.) Philosophers make much account of the dignity of virtue, but it is with poor grace, inasmuch as they themselves are destitute of true virtue.

4. *A good conscience*, which exists only in the godly, who know that God is at peace with them by, and for the sake of Christ, the mediator. Now, if God be favorable to us, we cannot but enjoy tranquillity of mind. Philosophers, however, do not comfort their followers in this manner; for when they are afflicted they ask, *Why doth not good fortune, or prosperity, follow a good conscience?* And hence they complain and murmur, as Cato and others have done.

5. *The final causes, or ends*, which are — 1. The glory of God, which is apparent in our deliverance. 2. Our salvation. "We are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." 3. The conversion of others, together with the enlargement of the church. The apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus, that thus others might be converted, and confirmed in the faith. Philosophers tell us, it is a good end, when any one suffers for the purpose of saving his country, and obtaining everlasting glory and renown. But in the mean time, miserable men! they are led to ask, *What will these things profit us when we die?*

6. *A comparison of events.* It is better to be chastened of the Lord for a short season, than to live in the greatest abundance, and at last be driven from God, and be cast into everlasting destruction. Philosophers, comparing evils with each other, find but little good arising from this comparison, whilst they are ignorant of the chief good, to obtain which we ought to be willing to suffer all the varied ills of life.

7. *The hope of recompense, or of reward*, in this and in another life. "Great is your reward in heaven." (Matt. 5: 12.) We know that there are other blessings in reversion for us, with which the afflictions of this life are not to be compared. And even in this life the godly enjoy greater blessings than other men; for they have peace with God, and all other spiritual gifts. Temporal blessings, even though they are small as far as it respects the righteous, yet they are profitable to them. "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters," &c., "but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, and in the world to come eternal life." "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." "We glory in tribulations." (Mark 10: 29, 23. Ps. 37: 16. Rom. 5: 3.) The hope of reward may administer some little comfort to philosophers in light afflictions, but not in those which are grievous; because they think it better to be without this reward than to endure great sufferings for the sake of obtaining it; and also because they regard it as uncertain, small, and transient.

8. *The example of Christ and of his saints.* "The servant is not above his Lord." (Matt. 10: 24.) God also desires that we should be conformed to the image of his Son. We then follow Christ in reproach, and glory. Gratitude requires this; because Christ died for our salvation. Holy martyrs have suffered, nor did they perish under their afflictions. We ought not to ask for ourselves a better lot than theirs, since we are not better than they, but much worse. They have suffered and have been delivered by God. Let us therefore look for a similar event, because the

love of God towards his people is unchangeable. "So persecuted they the prophets, which were before you." "Resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." (Matt. 5: 12. 1 Pet. 5: 9.)

9. *The presence and help of God in our afflictions.* God is present with us, by his Spirit, strengthening and comforting us under the cross. He does not permit us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear; and also, with every temptation, opens a way of escape, and always proportions our afflictions to our strength, that we may not be overcome. "We have the first fruits of the Spirit." "I will be with him in trouble." "He shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever." "If a man love me, my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "I will not leave you comfortless." "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." (Rom. 8: 23. Ps. 91: 15. John 14: 16; 23: 18. Is. 49: 15.)

10. *Complete and final deliverance*, is the crowning point of all the rest. The first is the chief comfort, and foundation of all the others; this is the perfection and consummation of all. For as there are degrees of punishment, so there are also degrees of deliverance. The first degree is in this life, where we have the beginning of eternal life. The second is in temporal death, when the soul is carried into Abraham's bosom. The third will be in the resurrection of the dead, and their glorification, when we shall be perfectly happy, both in body and soul. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (Rev. 21: 4.)

FIFTH LORD'S DAY.

THE SECOND GENERAL DIVISION OF THE CATECHISM.

OF THE DELIVERANCE OF MAN.

Question 12. Since, then, by the righteous judgment of God, we deserve temporal and eternal punishment, is there no way by which we may escape that punishment, and be again received into favor?

Answer. God will have his justice satisfied; and therefore we must make this satisfaction, either by ourselves, or by another.

EXPOSITION.

Having shown, in the first part of the Catechism, that all men are in a state of eternal condemnation, on account of not having rendered the obedience which the law of God requires, we are next led to inquire whether there is, or may be, any way of escape or deliverance from this state of misery and death? To this question the catechism answers, that deliverance may be granted, if satisfaction be made to the law and justice of God, by a punishment sufficient for the sin that has been committed. The law binds all, either to obedience, or if this is not rendered, to punishment; and the performance or payment of either is perfect righteousness, which God approves of in whomsoever it is found.

There are two ways of making satisfaction by punishment. The one is by ourselves. This is the one which the law teaches and the justice of God requires. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the law to do them." (Gal. 3: 10.) This is legal.

The other way of making satisfaction is by another. This is the method which the gospel reveals, and the mercy of God allows. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son, &c." "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c." (Rom. 8: 3. John 3: 16.) This is evangelical. It is not, indeed, taught in the law; but it is no where condemned, or excluded. Neither is it repugnant to the justice of God; for if only satisfaction be made on the part of man by a sufficient punishment for his disobedience, the law is satisfied, and the justice of God permits the party offending to be set at liberty, and received into favor. This is the sum and substance.

Furthermore, there are two things taught in this question; the possibility of this deliverance, and how it is effected. That these things may be better understood, we shall now consider:

I. *What the deliverance of man is:*
II. *Whether such a deliverance be possible:*
III. *Whether it be necessary and certain:*
IV. *Whether a perfect deliverance may be expected:*
V. *How it is accomplished.*

I. What the Deliverance of Man is.

The word deliverance is relative; for every deliverance is from something to something, as from captivity to liberty. As now all men, by nature, are the slaves of sin, satan, and death, we cannot better and more correctly understand what the deliverance of man is, than by a consideration of what his misery consists in. The misery of man consists, first, in the loss of righteousness, and in inbred corruption, or sin; and secondly, in the punishment of sin. His deliverance, therefore, from this misery, requires, first, the pardon and abolishing of sin, and a restoration of the righteousness lost; and secondly, a release from all punishment and misery. As therefore, the misery of man consists of two parts — sin and death — so his deliverance consists of two parts — a deliverance from sin and death. Deliverance from sin includes the pardon of sin, that it may not be imputed unto us, and an abolishing of sin by the renewing of our nature, that it may not reign in us. Deliverance from death, is a deliverance from despair, and a sense of the wrath of God — from the calamities and miseries of this life; and also from death, both temporal and spiritual.

From these things it is easy to perceive what we are to understand by the deliverance of man. It consists in a perfect deliverance from all the miseries of sin and death, which the fall has entailed upon man, and a full restoration of righteousness, holiness, life, and eternal felicity, through Christ; which is begun in all the faithful in this life, and will be fully perfected in the life to come.

II. Whether such a Deliverance be Possible.

That this deliverance of man from the ruins of the fall was possible, may be inferred from a consideration:

1. Of the immense goodness and mercy of God, which would not suffer the whole human race to perish forever.

2. The infinite wisdom of God would naturally lead us to expect that he would be able to devise a way by which he might exhibit his mercy towards the human race, and yet not violate his justice.

3. A consideration of the power of God might lead us to the conclusion that he who could create man out of nothing after his own image, could also raise him up from the ruins of the fall, and deliver him from sin and death. To deny the possibility of the deliverance of man is, therefore, to deny the goodness, wisdom, and power of God. But in God there is neither wisdom, nor goodness, nor power wanting; for "the Lord bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up." "Unto God, the Lord, belong the issues from death." "The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save." (1 Sam. 2: 6. Ps. 68: 20. Is. 59: 1.)

But we must enquire, particularly, Whence do we know this deliverance to be possible? Whether human reason, without the word of God, can arrive at this knowledge? And whether Adam, after his fall, could know or hope for it?

That our deliverance was possible, we now know from the event itself, and from the gospel, or from that revelation which God has been pleased to make. Human reason, however, if left to itself, could know nothing of this deliverance, or of the manner in which it could be effected,

although it might probably have conjectured that it was not impossible, (which, by the way, is very doubtful,) in as much as it is not presumable that so glorious a creature as man would be created for eternal misery; or that God would give a law that could never be fulfilled. These two arguments are in themselves forcible, but human reason, on account of its corruption, does not subscribe to them. As, therefore, those who are without the church and ignorant of the gospel, can have no knowledge or hope of deliverance; so Adam, after the fall, without a special promise and revelation, could neither know nor hope for it, by the mere exercise of his reason. When sin was once committed, the mind of man could think of nothing but the severe justice of God, which does not permit sin to pass with impunity, and the unchangeable truth of God, which had declared, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 3: 17.) Adam knew full well that it was necessary to make satisfaction to this justice and truth of God, by the everlasting destruction of the sinner; and hence he could not hope for any deliverance in his case. He might, indeed, probably have supposed that deliverance could be effected if satisfaction could be made in any way, to the justice and truth of God; but he could neither hope for it nor conceive how, or by whom it could be accomplished; yea, the angels themselves could never have devised this method of deliverance, had not God, out of his infinite wisdom and goodness, conceived it and made it known through the gospel.

But some object to what is here said, as follows: If deliverance seemed impossible to Adam, on account of the justice and truth of God, then it must now, also, seem to be impossible; for a violation of the justice and truth of God, cannot take place now any more than formerly. But the escape of the sinner from punishment would be a violation of these attributes of God. To this we reply, that if the sinner would escape punishment without a sufficient satisfaction being made for sin, it would, indeed, be a violation of the justice and truth of God. Had Adam seen a satisfactory solution of this problem, he would have had reason to hope for deliverance, especially if he had considered, at the same time, the nature of God, his infinite goodness, wisdom, and power, and the end for which he created man; and that it would not be consistent with the character of God, who is most wise, good, and powerful, to create a being of such noble powers as man, to endure everlasting misery; or that he would give such a law to man, as could never be perfectly obeyed. Yet he could not entertain any certain hope, for, as we have already remarked, before the gospel was published, neither he, nor any other creature, was able to see, or contrive a way of escape from punishment, that would be in harmony with the justice of God; nor could any way of escape ever have been contrived, had not God revealed it through his Son.

This, now, is the substance of what has been said: Man, being fallen, could hope for no deliverance from sin and death, before he heard the joyful promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent; but yet he ought not, neither could he simply despair as though it were wholly impossible. For although he could not conceive any necessary reason from which he might conclude upon his future deliverance, nor understand the way in which satisfaction could be made, yet it does not follow, that if a creature could not discover this, therefore God could not discover it. He ought, therefore, to have looked away from himself to

the wisdom, goodness, and power of God, and not have despaired, although every thing seemed to drive him to desperation. Yet if the sound of the gospel had not reached his ear, nothing could have sufficiently comforted him under the temptations to which he was exposed. But after the promise was once made known, and he was brought to understand the method of redemption through Christ, then he could not only hope for deliverance with certainty, but could also resolve all doubts and objections which might arise, among which we may mention the following:

Obj. 1. The justice of God does not permit those who are deserving of eternal condemnation to go unpunished. We have all deserved eternal condemnation. Therefore, our deliverance is impossible, on account of the justice of God. Ans. Adam saw how the first proposition of this syllogism could be answered, viz: that the justice of God does not absolve and acquit those who are deserving of everlasting condemnation, unless satisfaction be made by a punishment corresponding with the offence.

Obj. 2. The justice and truth of God are both violated when that is not done which the former requires and the latter threatens. But if everlasting punishment and death be not inflicted upon man, that is not executed which the justice of God requires, and his truth threatens. Therefore, both are violated if man be not punished, which is impossible. Ans. Here again, Adam saw that the minor proposition was true only in case no punishment at all were inflicted, neither upon the sinner himself nor upon some one else who might offer himself as a substitute in the sinner's room and stead. But the promise which God had been pleased to reveal to him, made him acquainted with the fact that Christ, the seed of the woman, would, as man's substitute, bruise the serpent's head.

Obj. 3. That which the unchangeable truth and justice of God demand, is necessary and unchangeable. But the unchangeable truth and justice of God demand that the sinner be cast into everlasting punishment. Therefore the rejection of the sinner is necessary and unchangeable. Ans. He also saw an answer to the principal proposition of this objection, viz: that that is unchangeable which the justice of God demands absolutely, and not that which it requires conditionally; demanding either the everlasting punishment of the transgressor, or satisfaction through Christ.

Obj. 4. That is impossible which we have not the power of escaping. We have not the power of escaping sin and death. Therefore it is impossible for us to escape these evils. Ans. But here again Adam saw that an escape from these evils was impossible only in case God neither knew nor would reveal the way of deliverance, which was unknown to human reason, and to all created beings, and which they never could have discovered.

These and similar objections Adam was enabled, through the promise of the seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head, to repel and overcome. We, however, who live at the present day, can see, and understand much more clearly, the solution of these difficulties, than Adam could, inasmuch as we know certainly, from the gospel and the event itself, as well as from our own consciousness, that the deliverance of man was not only possible, and would take place at some future time, as Adam himself saw, but that it is also already accomplished by Christ. Hence the deliverance of man is, and always was, possible with God.

III. Whether Deliverance be necessary and certain.

Although God was not under the least obligation to deliver man from the misery of sin, but was free to leave all men in death, and save none; for "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again," (Rom. 11: 35); yet it may correctly be said, that man's deliverance was and is necessary,—understanding by this term not an absolute, but a conditional necessity, as it is called. This is proven:

1. Because God has most freely and unchangeably decreed and provided it; and it is impossible that he should lie, or be deceived. "As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that," &c. (Ez. 18: 23.)

2. Because God desires to be praised and glorified forever by man. "He hath made us to the praise of the glory of his grace." "Wherefore hast thou made all men in vain." (Eph. 1: 6. Ps. 89: 47.)

3. Because God did not in vain send his Son into the world, neither did Christ die in vain. "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing," &c. "I came to call sinners to repentance." "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (John 6: 38, 39. Matt. 9: 13. Rom. 4: 25. Gal. 2: 21.)

4. Because God is more inclined to mercy than to wrath. But in the punishment of the wicked his wrath is manifested; much more, therefore, will he manifest his mercy in the salvation of the righteous.

IV. Whether a perfect Deliverance may be expected.

This deliverance of man is perfect in this life, as it respects the commencement of it; but in the life to come, it will be perfect also as it respects the consummation of it. Now, it is perfect in all its parts, being a deliverance from the evil both of guilt and of punishment; then, it will be perfect also in the degrees of it, when all tears shall be wiped away from our eyes, when the perfect image of God will be restored in us, and God shall be all, and in all. This is proven:

1. Because God does not deliver us only in part, but saves and loves perfectly all those whom he saves. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1: 7.)

2. Because God will punish the wicked most severely, that they may by these punishments fully satisfy his justice. He will, therefore, also perfectly deliver the godly, since he is more inclined to mercy than wrath. Neither is the benefit of Christ more imperfect, or of less force than the sin of Adam. This would be the case, if he did not deliver us perfectly, because we have lost all righteousness and salvation in Adam. A perfect deliverance is, therefore, to be expected, but by degrees, as it has been shown. In this life it is perfect; in the resurrection it will be more perfect; and in glorification it will be most perfect.

V. How this Deliverance is accomplished.

The deliverance of which we have now spoken is accomplished: 1. By a full and sufficient satisfaction for sin. There is such a satisfaction, when the punishment which is inflicted on account of sin is equivalent to that which is eternal. 2. By abolishing sin, and renewing our nature, which is done by restoring in us the righteousness and image of God which we have lost, or by the perfect regeneration of our nature. Both of these are necessary to our deliverance.

Satisfaction is necessary, because the mercy of God, as has been shown, does not violate his justice, which demands satisfaction. The law binds either to obedience or punishment. But satisfaction cannot be made through obedience, because our past obedience is already impaired, and that which follows cannot make satisfaction for past offences. We are bound to render exact obedience every moment to the law, as a present debt. Hence, obedience being once impaired, there is no other way of making satisfaction except by punishment, according to the threatening: "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2: 17.) If a sufficient punishment be endured to satisfy the law, God is reconciled, and deliverance becomes possible.

So, in like manner, the abolishing of sin, and the renewing of our nature are necessary: because it is only upon the condition that we cease to offend God by our sins, and are thankful to him for our reconciliation, that he is willing to accept of this satisfaction. To be willing that God should receive us into his favor, and yet not be willing to abandon sin, is to mock God. But it is not possible for us to leave off and forsake sin, unless our nature be renewed. It is in this way, therefore, that the deliv erance of man is made possible.

Question 13. Can we ourselves then make this satisfaction?

Answer. By no means; but on the contrary we daily increase our debt.

EXPOSITION.

Having given an explanation of the manner in which our deliverance is accomplished, we must now inquire *by whom* this satisfaction, and abolishing of sin can be effected: whether by ourselves, or by some one else? And if by some one else, whether it be by a mere creature? And if not by a mere creature, by whom, therefore, and by what kind of a mediator? The first of these questions is answered in this 13th Question of the Catechism. The other two are answered in the 14th and 15th Questions of the Catechism.

We cannot make this satisfaction by and of ourselves, neither by obedience nor by punishment.

We cannot make it by obedience, because whatever good we perform we owe to God by present obligation. Hence it is impossible for us to satisfy for our past offences by any present obedience which we may render to the law of God, for we cannot deserve any thing at the hands of God for the present, much less for the time to come; neither can a double merit, that is to say, a merit for the present and the future, proceed from one satisfaction.

A more common and popular reason is assigned in the Catechism: *because we daily increase our debt.* We sin continually, and in sinning we increase our guilt and the displeasure of God towards us. Now he who never ceases to offend can never appease the party offended, just as a debtor who continually adds new accounts to former claims can never release himself from debt.

Neither can we make satisfaction to God for our sins *by punishment*, because our guilt being infinite, deserves an infinite punishment—one that is eternal, or that is equivalent to everlasting punishment. Sin being an offence against the highest good, deserves eternal condemnation, or at least such a temporal punishment as is equivalent to that which is eternal. But we cannot make satisfaction by a punishment that is eternal, because then we should never be freed from it. We would always be making satisfaction to the justice of God, and yet it would never be fully satisfied. Our satisfaction would never be perfect—it would never be a complete victory over sin and death, but would continue imperfect to all eternity, as the satisfaction of devils and wicked spirits. Nor can we make satisfaction by enduring such a temporal punishment as will be equivalent to that which is eternal, which is necessary in order that death may be overcome. Such a punishment as this cannot be endured by any mere creature, on account of many imperfections, as we shall presently show.

As we cannot, therefore, make satisfaction by ourselves, there is a necessity that this satisfaction should be made by another, if we would obtain deliverance from our misery.

From this we may readily return an answer to the following objection, which is sometimes made: We can never satisfy the law, neither by punishment nor obedience. Therefore the method of deliverance through satisfaction is of no account. Ans. It is not of small account; because although we are not able to make satisfaction through obedience, we are, nevertheless, able to make it through the endurance of a sufficient punishment, not in ourselves, but in Christ, who has satisfied the law both by obedience and punishment. Against this the following objections have been urged:

Obj. 1. The law requires our own obedience or punishment; because it is written: "He that doeth these things shall live by them." "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words," &c. Ans. The law does indeed require our obedience or punishment, but not exclusively, for it never excludes or condemns the satisfaction of another in our behalf, although it does not teach it, and is ignorant of it. But the Gospel reveals and shows this unto us in Christ.

Obj. 2. It is unjust to punish another in the place of the guilty. Therefore Christ could not be punished in our room and stead. Ans. It is not inconsistent with the justice of God that another should be punished in the place of those who are guilty, if these conditions are present. 1. If he who is punished be innocent. 2. If he be of the same nature with those for whom he makes satisfaction. 3. If he, of his own accord, offer himself as a satisfaction. 4. If he himself be able to endure and come forth from this punishment. This is the reason why men cannot punish one person in the place of another, because they cannot bring it to pass that the one that suffers should not perish under the punishment. 5. If he look to, and obtain the end which Christ had in view, viz: the glory of God and the salvation of man.

Question 14. Can there be found anywhere one, who is a mere creature, able to satisfy for us?

Answer. None; for first, God will not punish any other creature for the sin which man hath committed; and further, no mere creature can sustain the burden of God's eternal wrath against sin, so as to deliver others from it.

EXPOSITION.

The exclusive particle *mere* is added in this question, that the negative answer may be true; for it was necessary that a creature should make satisfaction for the creature's sin, but not such an one as was merely or only a creature, because such an one could not make the satisfaction which was required, as will appear in the remarks which we shall now make.

We must, therefore, since satisfaction must be made through another, enquire, whether this other person may be any creature besides man; and whether he may be a mere creature. We deny both propositions. Our reason for denying *the first* is, because God will not punish the sin which man has committed in any other creature. This is in accordance with the order of his justice, which does not permit one to sin and another to bear the punishment. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ez. 18: 20.) This reason proves that no creature, except man could satisfy for man: yea, God could not be satisfied for the sin of man by the eternal destruction of heaven and earth, and of the angels themselves, and all other creatures. Our reasons for denying the *second proposition* are these: 1. Because no creature possesses such power as to be able to sustain a finite punishment, equivalent to that which is infinite, for the purpose of making satisfaction for the infinite guilt of man. A mere creature would be consumed and reduced to nothing, before satisfaction could be made to God in this way: "For God is a consuming fire." "If thou shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh." &c. (Deut. 4: 24. Ps. 130: 3. Rom. 8: 3.) This reason proves that no creature in the whole universe was able to make satisfaction to God for man's sin, by punishment, so as to come forth from the same, which escape was necessary in order to our deliverance. There could, therefore, in this way, on account of the weakness of the creature, be no just proportion between sin and its punishment. 2. Because the punishment of a mere creature could not be a price of sufficient dignity and value for our redemption. 3. Because a mere creature could not have renewed and sanctified our nature, nor could such an one have brought it to pass that we should no longer sin, all of which it was necessary for our deliverer to accomplish.

Question 15. What sort of a mediator and deliverer, then, must we seek for?

Answer. For one who is very man, and perfectly righteous; and yet more powerful than all creatures; that is, one who is also very God.

EXPOSITION.

Since, then, we are not able of ourselves to make satisfaction to God for our sins, but must have some other satisfier or mediator in our place, we must enquire further, What sort of a deliverer must he be? To this we may reply, that he must of necessity be merely a creature, or merely God, or both. A mere creature, however, he cannot be, for the reasons already assigned. Merely God he could not be, because man, and not God, had sinned; and also because it behooved the mediator to suffer and die for the sins of man. But God, in himself, can neither suffer nor die. It follows, therefore, that such a mediator is required who is both God and man. The reasons for this will be assigned in the questions immediately following.

SIXTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 16. Why must he be very man, and also perfectly righteous?

Answer. Because the justice of God requires that the same human nature, which hath sinned, should likewise make satisfaction for sin; and one, who is himself a sinner, cannot satisfy for others.

EXPOSITION.

It behooved our Mediator to be man, and indeed very man, and perfectly righteous.

First, *It behooved him to be man*. 1. Because it was man that sinned. It was necessary, therefore, that man should make satisfaction for sin. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," &c. "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. (Rom. 5: 12. 1 Cor. 15: 21.) 2. That he might be able to die. It was necessary that he should make satisfaction for us by his death, and by the shedding of his blood, because it had been declared, "Thou shalt surely die." "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." (Gen. 2: 17. Heb. 9: 22.)

Secondly, *It behooved him to be very man*, descending from the same human nature which had sinned, and not created out of nothing, or let down from heaven, but subject to all our infirmities, sin excepted: 1. *Because the justice of God* required that the same human nature which had sinned, should likewise make satisfaction for sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "And in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Ez. 18: 20. Gen. 2: 17.) It was necessary, therefore, that he who would make satisfaction for man, should himself be very man, having sprung from the posterity of Adam, which had sinned. The following passages of scripture are here in point: "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." "He took on him the seed of Abraham; wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren," &c. (1 Cor. 15: 21. 1. Tim. 2: 5. Heb. 2: 16, 17.) So the Apostle says also, that we are buried with Christ in baptism, crucified with him, raised with him, &c. (Rom. 6: 4.

Col. 2: 12.) And Augustine, in his book on true religion, says: "*The very same nature was to be assumed, which was to be delivered.*" 2. *Because the truth of God* required it. The prophets, who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, often described our Mediator as one that is poor, weak, despised, &c. The 53d chap. of the prophecy of Isaiah furnishes us with a striking instance. 3. *On account of our comfort:* for if we did not know him to have sprung from Adam, we could not receive him as the promised Messiah, and as our brother, since the promise is, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 3:15; 22:18.) The Apostle Paul also says in relation to this: "He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one, (that is, of the same human nature); for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2: 11.) It was necessary therefore that he should spring from Adam, in order that he might be our brother. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same," &c. (Heb. 2: 14.) 4. That he might be a faithful High Priest, able to succor them that are tempted. "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." (Heb. 2: 17, 18.)

Thirdly, *It behooved him to be a perfectly righteous man*, one that was wholly free from the least stain of original and actual sin, that he might deservedly be our Saviour, and that his sacrifice might avail, not for himself, but for us: for if he himself had been a sinner, he would have had to satisfy for his own sins. "My *righteous* servant shall justify many." "Who did *no sin*, neither was guile found in his mouth." "Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the *just* for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (Is. 53: 11. 1 Pet. 2: 22; 3: 18.)

But he who is himself a sinner. If the Mediator himself had been a sinner he could not have escaped the wrath of God, much less could he have procured for others the favor of God, and exemption from punishment: neither could the passion, and death of him, who did not suffer as an innocent man, be a ransom for the sin of others. Therefore "God hath made him to be sin for us, (that is, a sacrifice for sin,) who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's." (2 Cor. 5: 26. Heb. 7: 26, 27.)

The man Christ was perfectly righteous, or has fulfilled the law in four respects. 1. *By his own righteousness.* Christ alone performed perfect obedience, such as the law requires. 2. *By enduring punishment* sufficient for our sins. There was a necessity that this double fulfillment of the law should be in Christ: for unless his righteousness had been full, and perfect, he could not have satisfied for the sins of others; and unless he had endured such punishment as has been described, he could not thereby have delivered us from everlasting punishment. The former is called the fulfilling of the law by obedience, by which he himself was conformable thereto; the latter is the fulfilling of the law by punishment, which he suffered for

us, that we might not remain subject to eternal condemnation. 3. Christ fulfills the law in us *by his Spirit*, when he by the same Spirit regenerates us, and by the law leads us to that obedience which is required from us, which is both external and internal, which we commence in this life, and which we shall perfectly and fully perform in the life to come. 4. Christ fulfills the law by teaching it, and freeing it from errors and interpolations, and by restoring its true sense, as he himself said, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it." (Matt. 5: 17.)

Question 17. Why must he in one person be also very God?

Answer. That he might, by the power of his Godhead, sustain, in his human nature, the burden of God's wrath; and might obtain for and restore to us, righteousness and life.

EXPOSITION.

It was necessary that our Mediator should not only be a man, and one that was truly such, and perfectly righteous; but that he should also be God — the true and mighty God — and not an imaginary Deity, or one that was adorned with excellent gifts, above angels and men, as heretics suppose. The reasons for this are the following:

1. That he might, by the power of his Godhead, sustain, in his human nature, the infinite wrath of God against sin, and endure a punishment, which, although it were temporal as it respects its duration, was nevertheless infinite in greatness, dignity, and value. If our Mediator had been only a man, and had taken upon himself the burden of God's wrath, he would have been crushed under its weight. It was necessary, therefore, that he should be possessed of infinite strength, and for this reason be God, that he might endure an infinite punishment, without sinking into despair, or being crushed under it.

There was a necessity that the punishment of the Mediator should be of infinite value, and equivalent to that which is eternal, that there might be a proportion between sin, and the punishment thereof. For there is not one sin amongst all the sins committed, from the beginning to the end of the world, so small that it does not deserve eternal death. Every sin is so exceedingly sinful, that it cannot be expiated by the eternal destruction of any creature.

It was proper, however, that this punishment should be finite in respect to time, because it was not necessary that the Mediator should for ever remain under death; but it became him to come forth from death, that he might accomplish the benefit of our redemption, that is, that he might perfectly merit, and having merited, might apply and bestow upon us the salvation which he purchased in our behalf. It was also required of our Mediator, both to merit and bestow righteousness, that he might be a perfect Saviour in merit, and efficacy. But these things could not have been accomplished by a mere man, who and of whatever strength he might have been possessed, if he, nevertheless, had not the power to come forth from death. It was necessary, therefore, that he who was to save others from death, should overcome death by his own power, and first throw it off from himself. But this he could not have done had he not been God.

2. It was necessary that the ransom which the Redeemer paid should be of infinite value, that it might possess a dignity and merit sufficient for the redemption of our souls, and that it might avail in the judgment of God, for the purpose of expiating our sins, and restoring in us that righteousness and life which we had lost. Hence it became the person who would make this satisfaction for us, to be possessed of infinite dignity, that is, to be God; for the dignity of this satisfaction, on account of which it might be acceptable to God and of infinite worth, although temporal, consists in two things — in the dignity of the person, and in the greatness of the punishment.

The dignity of the person who suffered appears in this, that it was God, the Creator himself, who died for the sins of the world; which is infinitely more than the destruction of all creatures, and avails more than the holiness of all the angels and men. Hence it is, that the Apostles, when they speak of the sufferings of Christ, almost always make mention of his Divinity. "God hath purchased the Church with his blood." "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." Yea, God himself, in Paradise, joined together these two: "The seed of the woman shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Acts 20: 28. 1 John 1: 7. John 1: 29. Gen. 3: 15.)

The greatness of the punishment which Christ endured appears in this, that he sustained the dreadful torments of hell, and the wrath of God against the sins of the whole world. "The pains of hell gat hold upon me." "God is a consuming fire." "The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." (Ps. 116: 3. Deut. 4: 24. Is. 53: 10.) From this we may perceive why it was, that Christ manifested such signs of distress in the prospect of death, whilst many of the martyrs met death with the greatest courage and composure.

Obj. The perfect fulfillment of the law by obedience might have been a satisfaction for our sins. But a mere man, had he only been perfectly righteous, might have fulfilled the law by obedience. Therefore, a mere man, being perfectly righteous, might have satisfied for our sins — and hence it was not necessary that our Mediator should be God. Ans. 1. We deny the major proposition, because it has already been shown that when obedience was once impaired, it was not possible that the justice of God could be satisfied for sin, unless by a sufficient punishment on account of the divine threatening, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2: 17.) 2. Although we may grant the minor proposition, that a mere man, by his obedience, might fulfill the law perfectly, yet this obedience could not be a satisfaction for the sins of another, because every one is bound to obey the law. It was necessary, therefore, that the Mediator should endure a sufficient punishment for us, and for this reason be armed with divine power; for the devils themselves are not able to sustain the burden of God's wrath against sin — much less could man. If it be objected, that the devils and the wicked do sustain and are compelled to sustain the eternal wrath of God, we answer, that they do, indeed, sustain the wrath of God, but not so as ever to satisfy his justice, and come out of their punishment; for their punishment will endure forever. But it behooved the Mediator to endure the burden of God's wrath,

that, having made satisfaction, he might remove it from himself, and also from us.

3. It was necessary that the Mediator should be God, that he might reveal the secret will of God concerning the redemption of mankind, which he could not have done, had he been merely a man. No creature could ever have known, or discovered, the will of God concerning our redemption, had not the Son of God revealed it. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1: 18.)

4. It behooved the Mediator to be God, that he might be able to give the Holy Ghost, gather a church, be present with it, and bestow and preserve the benefits purchased by his death. It did not only become him to be made a sacrifice, to throw off death from himself, and intercede for us with God; but it became him also to give assurance that we would no more offend God by our sins. This, however, on account of our corruption, no one could promise in our behalf, who had not the power of giving the Holy Spirit, and through him, the power of conforming us to the image of God. But to give the Holy Spirit, and through him to regenerate the heart, is peculiar to God alone, whose Spirit he is. "Whom I will send unto you from the Father." (John 15: 26.) Only he, who is Lord of nature, can reform it.

5. Finally, it was necessary that the Messiah should be "THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." (Jer. 23: 6.)

Obj. The party offended cannot be Mediator. Christ is the Mediator. Therefore, he cannot be the party offended, that is, God. Ans. The major proposition is true only when the party offended is such as admits of no personal distinctions; which, however, is not the case as regards the Godhead. Vide Ursini vol. i. p. 120.

Question 18. Who, then, is that Mediator, who is, in one person, both very God, and a real righteous man?

Answer. Our Lord Jesus Christ; who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

EXPOSITION.

We have now shown what kind of a Mediator it is necessary for us to have. The next question which claims our attention is, *Who is this Mediator?* That this Mediator is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, manifested in the flesh, is proven by these considerations:

1. It became the Mediator to be very God, as has been shown. God the Father, however, could not be the Mediator; because he does not work through himself, but through the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Neither is the Father a messenger; because he is sent by no one, but himself sends the Mediator. Nor could the Holy Ghost be the Mediator; because he was to be sent by the Mediator into the hearts of the elect. Therefore, the Son alone is this Mediator.

2. It was necessary that the Mediator should have that which it became him to confer upon us. It became him, now, to confer upon us the right

and title of the sons of God, which we had forfeited; that is, it became him to bring it to pass, that God might, for his Son's sake, adopt us as his children. This, however, Christ alone was able to effect, because he alone had the right thereof. The Holy Ghost had not this right, because he is not the Son. Neither did it belong to the Father, for the same reason; and also because it became him to adopt us among his children, through the Son. Therefore, the Word, who is the natural Son of God, is alone our Mediator, in whom, as in the first begotten, we are adopted as the sons of God, as it is said: "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." "As many as received him, to them he gave the power to be called the sons of God." "Unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ." "He hath made us to be accepted in the Beloved." (John 8: 36; 1: 12. Eph. 1: 5, 6.)

3. The Son, alone, is the Word, the Ambassador of the Father, and that person who was sent to the human race, to reveal the will of God, through whom the Father operates and gives the Holy Spirit; and through whom, also, the second creation is accomplished; for it is through the Son that we are made new creatures. The Scriptures, for this reason, every where join the first and second creation, because the second was to be effected by the same person through whom the first was made. "All things were made by the Son." (John 1: 3.) The Mediator was also to be a Messenger, and Peace-maker, between God and us, and to regenerate us by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Son alone is this Mediator.

4. It belongs to the Mediator to send immediately the Holy Spirit. But it is the Son alone who thus sends the Holy Spirit. The Father does, indeed, send the Holy Spirit, but it is through the Son. The Son sends the Spirit immediately from the Father, as he himself declares: "Whom I will send unto you from the Father." (John 15: 26.)

5. It became the Mediator to suffer and die. But it was not possible for any of the persons of the Godhead to suffer and die, except the Son, who assumed our nature. "God was manifested in the flesh." "Christ was put to death in the flesh." (1 Tim. 3: 16. 1 Pet. 3: 18.) Therefore, the Son is the Mediator.

6. That the Son is the Mediator may be proven by a comparison of the prophecies of the Old Testament with their fulfillment in the New Testament.

7. The works and miracles of Christ establish his claims to the office of Mediator. "The works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." "Believe the works." "When Christ will come, he will do more miracles than these." "Go and shew John those things which ye do hear and see. The blind receive their sight," &c. (John 5: 36; 10: 38; 7; 31. Matt. 11: 4, 5.)

8. By these clear testimonies of Scripture: "There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." "Christ is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" that is, he is made unto us a teacher of wisdom, a justifier, a sanctifier, and a redeemer; which is the same as to say he is a Mediator and Saviour, both by his merit and efficacy; for in this declaration of the Apostle, the abstract is put for the concrete. (1 Tim. 2: 5. 1 Cor. 1: 30.)

It is here worthy of notice that the Mediator is said to be *made unto us of God;* which means that he was appointed and given. The Mediator

ought to have been given by us, and to have proceeded from us, because we had sinned. But we were not able to give a Mediator, in as much as we were all the children of wrath. Therefore, it was necessary that he should be given unto us of God.

It is also worthy of notice that righteousness and holiness were one and the same thing in us before the fall, viz: an inherent conformity with God and the divine law, as they are now the same thing in the holy angels. Since the fall, however, they are not the same thing in us. For, now, Christ is our righteousness; and our justification consists in the imputation of his righteousness, by which we are accounted just before God. Holiness is the beginning of our conformity with God, whilst sanctification is the carrying forward of this conformity with God, which in this life is imperfect, but which will be fully perfected in the life to come; when righteousness and holiness will again be the same thing in us, as they are now in the holy angels. The sum and substance of the whole doctrine of the Mediator is contained in what now follows.

CONCERNING THE MEDIATOR.

The doctrine of the Mediator, which is intimately connected with the glory of God and our comfort, must be carefully considered for the following reasons: 1. That we may acknowledge and magnify the mercy of God, in that he has given his Son to be our Mediator, and to be made a sacrifice for our sins. 2. That we may know God to be just, in as much as he would not, out of his clemency, pardon sin; but was so greatly displeased therewith that he would not remit it, except satisfaction were made by the death of his Son. 3. That we may be assured of eternal life, in having a Mediator who is both willing and able to grant it unto us. 4. Because the doctrine of the Mediator is the foundation, and substance, of the doctrine of the church. 5. On account of heretics, who at all times oppose, with great bitterness, this doctrine; and that, having a proper knowledge of it, we may be able to defend it against all their assaults.

The doctrine of the Mediator seems to belong to the article of justification, because there also the office of the Mediator is explained. But it is one thing to teach what, and what kind of a benefit justification is, and how it is received, which is done when the doctrine of justification is treated of; and it is another thing to show whose benefit it is, and by whom it is bestowed upon us, which properly belongs here.

The principal things to be considered in relation to the Mediator, are the following:

I. *What a Mediator is:*
II. *Whether we need a Mediator:*
III. *What his office is:*
IV. *What kind of a Mediator he ought to be:*
V. *Who he is:*
VI. *Whether there can be more than one Mediator.*

I. What a Mediator is.

A mediator, in general, signifies one who reconciles two parties that are at variance, by interposing himself and pacifying the offended party, by entreaty, by satisfaction, and giving security that the like offence will not again be committed. A mediator, in the German, is *ein schiedmann*. To reconcile includes: 1. To intercede for the offender with the offended. 2. To make satisfaction for the injury done. 3. To promise, and bring it to pass, that the offending party shall not repeat the offence. 4. To bring the parties at variance together. If any of these conditions are wanting, there can be no true reconciliation.

But in special, and as here applied to Christ, a Mediator is a person reconciling God, who is angry with sin, and the human race exposed to eternal death on account of sin, by making satisfaction to divine justice by his death, interceding for the guilty, and applying, at the same time, his merits through faith to them that believe, regenerating them by his Holy Spirit, thus bringing it to pass that they cease from sinning; and finally hearing the groans and prayers of those that call upon him. Or, a Mediator is a peace-maker between God and men, appeasing the anger of God, and restoring men to his favor, by interceding and making satisfaction for their sins, bringing it to pass that God loves men, and men love God, so that a constant and eternal peace or agreement is effected between them

A middle person, and mediator, are different. The former is the name of the person — the latter the name of the office. Christ is both. He is a middle person, because in him is the nature of each party — he has the nature of God and of man. He is a Mediator, because he reconciles us to God; although he is to a certain extent a middle person, in the same respect in which he is a Mediator; because in him the two extremes, God and man, are joined together.

Addenda. It is sometimes asked, whether Adam had need of a Mediator before the fall? To this, answer may be returned according to the signification which we attach to the term, Mediator. If we mean by it, one through whose mediation, or by whom God bestows his benefits, and communicates himself to us, then Adam, even before his fall, had need of a Mediator, because Christ ever has been the person through whom the Father creates and quickens all things; for "in him was life," both natural and spiritual, "and the life was the light of men." (John 1: 4.) But if we understand by a Mediator, one who performs these and all the other duties which belong to the office, then we reply that Adam did not need a Mediator before the fall. We must observe, however, that the Scriptures do not speak of Christ, as being Mediator before the fall of man.

II. Whether we need a Mediator with God.

That we need a Mediator is evident —

1. Because the justice of God does not admit of any reconciliation without a return to his favor. An advocate is, therefore, necessary. Neither can we be reconciled to God except intercession be made in our behalf. An intercessor is, therefore, needed. So, satisfaction is demanded. Hence there must be one to satisfy. Then there must be an application of the benefit, for there is a necessity that it should be received. Hence there

must be some one to apply the benefit of redemption. And, finally, without a removal of sin, and the restoration of the image of God in us, we will not cease to sin against God. Hence, we need some one to deliver us from sin, and renew our nature. But of ourselves we are not able to accomplish these things; we cannot appease God, who is angry; we cannot make ourselves acceptable in his sight, &c. We need, therefore, another person to act as Mediator for us, who may perform these things in our behalf.

2. God demanded a Mediator from the party which had committed the offence. As a divine Being, he could not receive satisfaction from himself. His justice made it necessary that the offending party should make satisfaction, or obtain favor through such a Mediator as would be able to satisfy perfectly, and also be most acceptable to God, so as not to be driven from his presence; and who might, by his influence with God, be able easily to reconcile us to him by making satisfaction, entreaty and intercession in our behalf. Such a Mediator, however, we were entirely unable to find from among ourselves; because we were all the children of wrath. There was, therefore, a necessity for some third person to come in as a Mediator, who should be given of God, and who would be very man, and at the same time most acceptable to God.

3. It is necessary that those who would obtain deliverance should make satisfaction to the justice of God, either by themselves, or by another. Those who cannot make this satisfaction of themselves have need of a Mediator. It is required of us now, if we would obtain deliverance from sin, to satisfy the justice of God either by ourselves, or by another. But we are unable to effect this by ourselves. Hence we have need of a Mediator.

Obj. Where there is but one way of making satisfaction, no other is to be sought, or proposed. The law acknowledges but one way, which is, by ourselves. Therefore we must not propose any other; nor must we say, *either by ourselves, or by another.* Ans. The whole is conceded, as it respects the law: for the law prescribes but one way of making satisfaction, and it is in vain that we look for another. But yet whilst this is true as touching the law, it, nevertheless, does not reject every other way. It does indeed say that satisfaction must be made through ourselves. But it never says, *only through ourselves.* It does not, therefore, exclude the method of making satisfaction through another. And although God did not express this other method in the law, yet it was comprehended in his secret counsel, and afterwards revealed in the gospel. The law does not, therefore, explain this method, but leaves it to be unfolded by the gospel. Nor is there in this any conflict, or want of agreement between the law and the gospel, inasmuch as the law (as has just been remarked) no where adds the exclusive particle, saying that satisfaction can *only* be made by ourselves.

4. That we have need of a Mediator with God, may be shown by many other considerations, of which we may mention the following: 1. The chidings and compunctions of conscience. 2. The punishments of the wicked. 3. The sacrifices instituted by God, which referred to, and shadowed forth the perfect sacrifice of Christ. 4. The sacrifices of the heathen and Papists, with which they desired to please God, which had their origin in the feeling, or consciousness of the need of some satisfaction being made in order to our acceptance with God.

III. What the office of the Mediator is.

It becomes a Mediator to treat with both parties, the offended and offending. It was in this way that Christ performed the office of Mediator, treating with each party.

With God, the offended party, he does these things:—1. He intercedes with the Father for us, and prays that our sin may not be laid to our charge. 2. He offers himself as a satisfaction in our behalf. 3. He makes this satisfaction by dying for us, and enduring a punishment sufficient to meet our case, finite indeed as to time, but infinite in dignity and value. 4. He becomes our surety, that we shall no more offend God by our sins. Without this suretiship intercession finds no place, not even with men, much less with God. 5. He at length effects this promise in us by giving us his Holy Spirit, and everlasting life.

With us, as the offending party, he does these things:—1. He presents himself to us as the messenger of the Father, revealing this, his will, that he should present himself as our Mediator, and that the Father accepts of his satisfaction. 2. He makes this satisfaction, and grants and applies it unto us. 3. He works faith in us, by giving us the Holy Spirit, that we may embrace, and not reject this benefit which is offered unto us; because there can be no reconciliation unless each party consents: "He works in us both to will, and to do." (Phil. 2: 13.) 4. He brings it to pass by the same Spirit that we leave off sinning and commence a new life. 5. He preserves us in this state of reconciliation by faith and new obedience, and defends us against the devil, and all enemies, even against ourselves, lest we fall. 6. Finally, he will raise us up from the dead, and glorify us, that is, he will perfect the salvation begun, and the gifts which we lost in Adam, as well as those which he has merited for us.

All these things Christ does, obtains, and perfects, not only by his merits, but also by his efficacy. He is, therefore, said to be a Mediator, both in merit and efficacy; because he does not only by his sacrifice merit for us, but he also, by virtue of his Spirit, effectually confers upon us his benefits, which consist in righteousness, and eternal life, according to what is said: "I lay down my life for the sheep." "I give unto them eternal life." "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given unto the Son to have life in himself." "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, so the Son quickeneth whom he will." (John 10: 15, 28; 5: 21, 46.)

There are many benefits comprehended in the office of the Mediator; for God has instituted it for the purpose of bestowing blessings upon the Church. Paul comprehends these blessings very briefly in four general terms, when he says, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who, of God, is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." (1 Cor. 1: 30.) He is *made unto us wisdom*, 1. Because he is the matter and subject of the wisdom which we possess. "I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. 2: 2; 1: 24.) 2. Because he is the cause of our wisdom, and that in three ways; because he brought it from the bosom of the Father — instituted, and preserves the ministry of the word, through which he instructs us concerning the will of

the Father, and his office as Mediator; and, finally, because he works effectually in the hearts of the elect, so that they assent to the doctrine, and are renewed in the image of God. In a word, Christ is our wisdom, because he is the subject, the author, and the medium. He is our *righteousness*, that is, our justifier. Our righteousness is in him, as in the subject; and he himself gives this unto us by his merit and efficacy. He is our *sanctification*, that is, sanctifier; because he regenerates us, and sanctifies us through the Holy Spirit. He is our *redemption*, that is, redeemer; because he finally delivers us: for the word that is here translated redemption, does not only signify the price, but also the effect and consummation of our redemption.

IV. What kind of a Mediator he ought to be.

This question is most wisely connected with the foregoing; for since it is manifest, that satisfaction must be made — that it must be made through another, and that it must be with the satisfaction of the Mediator, which has already been described, we must now enquire, *What kind of a Mediator is he?*

In answer to this question we would reply, that our Mediator must be man — very man, deriving his nature from our race, and retaining it for ever — a perfectly righteous man, and very God. In a word, he must be a person that is *theanthropic*, having both natures, the divine and human, in the unity of his person, that he may truly be a middle person, and mediator between God and men.

The proofs concerning the person of the Mediator are drawn from his office; for it was necessary that he should be, and possess all that was included in his office. These proofs have been already presented and explained, in the exposition of the 15th, 16th and 17th Questions of the Catechism, to which we refer the reader.

V. Who this Mediator is, who in one Person is both God and Man.

The Mediator has thus far been spoken of as the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, as we have shown in the eighteenth question of the Catechism. The sum and substance of what we are to believe in relation to this subject is this, that the Scriptures attribute at the same time these three things to Christ, and to him alone:

First, that he is God. "The Word was God." "All things were made by him." "The Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." "Who was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness." "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." (John 1: 1. Acts 20: 28. Rom. 1: 4. 1 John 5: 7.) To these declarations of scripture, we may add those which attribute to Christ divine worship, invocation, hearing of prayer, and such works as are peculiar to God alone. Those passages which attribute to Christ the name of Jehovah, are also in point. (Jer. 23: 6. Zach. 2: 10. Mal. 3: 1.) The same thing may in like manner be said of those declarations of Scripture which refer to Christ, the things spoken of Jehovah in the Old Testament. (Is. 9: 6. John 12: 40, &c.)

2. That he is very man. The humanity of Christ is proven by those declarations of Scripture which affirm that he was man, the Son of man, the son of David, the son of Abraham, &c. (1 Tim. 2: 5. Matt. 1: 1; 9: 6; 16: 13.) Also, those which declare that he was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, that he had a body of flesh, and came in the flesh. (Rom. 1: 3. Col. 1: 22. 1 John 4: 2.) The same thing is also proven by those passages which attribute to Christ things peculiar to man; as, to grow, to eat, to drink, to be ignorant, to be fatigued, to rest, to be circumcised, to be baptized, to weep, to rejoice, &c.

3. That these two natures in Christ constitute one person. Those declarations of Scripture are here in point, which attribute, through the communication of properties, to the person of Christ, those things which are peculiar to the divine, or human nature. "The Word was made flesh." "He partook of flesh and blood." "Before Abraham was, I am." "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." "God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, by whom also he made the world." "Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." "Who is over all, God blessed for ever." "Had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." (John 1: 14. Heb. 2: 14. John 8: 38. Matt. 28: 20. Heb. 1: 1, 2. 1 John 4: 3. Rom. 9: 6. 1 Cor. 2: 8.)

VI. Whether there can be more than one Mediator.

There is but one Mediator between God and man. The reason of this is, because no one but the Son of God can perform the office of Mediator; and as there is only one natural Son of God, there cannot be more than one Mediator.

Obj. 1. But the saints also make intercession for us. Therefore, they are also mediators. Ans. There is a great difference between the intercession of Christ, and that of the saints who live in the world, and make intercession both for themselves, and others, even their persecutors and enemies: for the saints depend upon the merits of Christ in order that their intercessions may avail, whilst Christ depends upon his own merits. And still more, Christ alone offered himself a surety, and satisfier, sanctifying himself for us, that is, presenting himself in our stead before the judgment seat of God, which cannot be said of the saints.

Obj. 2. Where there are many means, there must be more than one Mediator. But there are many means of our salvation. Therefore, there are more mediators than one. Ans. We deny the major proposition; for the means, and Mediator of salvation, are not one and the same thing.

OF THE COVENANT OF GOD.

It has been shown, that a Mediator is one who reconciles parties that are at variance, as God and men. This reconciliation is called in the Scriptures a Covenant, which has particular reference to the Mediator, inasmuch as every mediator is the mediator of some covenant, and the reconciler of two opposing parties. Hence the doctrine of the Covenant which God made with man, is closely connected with the doctrine of the Mediator. The principal questions which claim our attention in the consideration of this subject, are the following:

I. *What is this Covenant?*
II. *Was it possible without a Mediator?*
III. *Is it one, or more than one?*
IV. *In what do the old and new Covenants agree, and in what do they differ?*

I. What is this Covenant?

A covenant in general is a mutual contract, or agreement between two parties, in which the one party binds itself to the other to accomplish something upon certain conditions, giving or receiving something, which is accompanied with certain outward signs and symbols, for the purpose of ratifying in the most solemn manner the contract entered into, and for the sake of confirming it, that the engagement may be kept inviolate. From this general definition of a covenant, it is easy to perceive what we are to understand by the Covenant here spoken of, which we may define as a mutual promise and agreement, between God and men, in which God gives assurance to men that he will be merciful to them, remit their sins, grant unto them a new righteousness, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life by and for the sake of his Son, our Mediator. And, on the other side, men bind themselves to God in this covenant that they will exercise repentance and faith, or that they will receive with a true faith this great benefit which God offers, and render such obedience as will be acceptable to him. This mutual engagement between God and man is confirmed by those outward signs which we call sacraments, which are holy signs, declaring and sealing unto us God's good will, and our thankfulness and obedience.

A testament is the last will of a testator, in which he at his death declares what disposition he wishes to be made of his goods, or possessions.

In the Scriptures, the terms Covenant and Testament are used in the same sense, for the purpose of explaining more fully and clearly the idea of this Covenant of God; for both of them refer to and express our reconciliation with God, or the mutual agreement between God and men.

This agreement, or reconciliation, is called a *Covenant*, because God promises to us certain blessings, and demands from us in return our obedience, employing also certain solemn ceremonies for the confirmation thereof.

It is called a *Testament*, because this reconciliation was made by the interposition of the death of Christ, the testator, that it might be ratified; or because Christ has obtained this reconciliation by his death, and left it unto us, as parents, at their decease, leave their possessions to their children. This reason is adduced by the apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, where he says: "For this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force, after m n are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all whilst the testator liveth." (Heb. 9: 15, 16, 17.) Whilst the testator lives he has the right to change, to take from, or to add any thing which he chooses to his will. The Hebrew word *Berith*, signifies only a covenant, and not a testament; whilst the Greek word διαθηκη, which is used in the Epistle to the Hebrews, signifies both a covenant and a testament, from which it is inferred (as some suppose) that this Epistle was written not in the Hebrew, but in the Greek language.

Obj. A testament is made by the death of the testator. But God can not die. Therefore his testament is not ratified; or this reconciliation can not be called a testament. Ans. We deny the minor proposition; because God is said to have redeemed the Church with his own blood. Hence he must have died; but it was in his human nature, according to the testimony of the apostle Peter, who says of Christ the testator, who was both God and man, that he was put to death in the flesh. (1 Pet. 3: 18.)

II. How could this Covenant between God and Man be made?

This covenant could only be made by a Mediator, as may be inferred from the fact that we, as one of the parties, were not able to satisfy God for our sins, so as to be restored to his favor. Yea, such was our miserable condition, that we would not have accepted of the benefit of redemption had it been purchased by another. Then God as the other party, could not, on account of his justice, admit us into his favor without a sufficient satisfaction. We were the enemies of God, and hence there could be no way of access to him, unless by the intercession of Christ, the Mediator, as has been fully shown in the remarks which we have made upon the question — Why was a Mediator necessary? We may conclude, therefore, that this reconciliation was possible only by the satisfaction and death of Christ, the Mediator.

III. Is this Covenant one, or more?

This covenant is one in substance, but two-fold in circumstances; or it is one as it respects the general conditions upon which God enters into an engagement with us, and we with him; and it is two as it respects the conditions which are less general, or as some say, as it respects the mode of its administration.

The Covenant is one in substance. 1. Because there is but one God, one Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, one way of reconciliation, one faith, and one way of salvation for all who are and have been saved from the beginning. It is a great question, and one that has been much debated, *whether the ancient fathers were saved in a different way from that in which we are saved*, which, unless it be correctly explained, throws much obscurity and darkness around the gospel. The following passages of Scripture teach us what we are to believe in relation to this subject: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." "And God gave him to be Head over all things to the Church." "From whom the whole body fitly joined together," &c. "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "There is none other name under heaven given whereby we must be saved." "No one knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom," &c. "No one cometh to the Father but by me." "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life;" he means, I am the way by which even Adam obtained salvation. "Many kings and prophets desired to see the things which ye see," &c. "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad." (Heb. 13: 8. Eph. 1: 22; 4: 16. John 1: 18. Acts 4: 12. Matt. 11: 27. John 14: 6. Luke 10: 24. John 8: 56.) All those, therefore, who have been saved, those under the law

as well as those under the gospel, had respect to Christ, who is the only Mediator, through whom alone they were reconciled to God and saved. Hence, there is but one covenant.

2. There is but one covenant, because the principal conditions, which are called the substance of the covenant, are the same before and since the incarnation of Christ; for in each testament God promises to those that repent and believe, the remission of sin; whilst men bind themselves, on the other hand, to exercise faith in God, and to repent of their sins.

But there are said to be two covenants, the old and the new, as it respects the circumstances and conditions which are less general, which constitute the form, or the mode of administration, contributing to the principal conditions, in order that the faithful, by their help, may obtain those which are general.

IV. In what do the Old and the New Covenant agree, and in what do they differ?

Since there is but one covenant, and the Scriptures speak of it as though it were two, we must consider in what particulars the old and the new covenants agree and in what they differ.

They agree, 1. *In having God as their author and Christ as the Mediator.* But Moses, some say, was the Mediator of the Old covenant. To this we reply, that he was Mediator only as a type of Christ, who was even then already Mediator, but is now the only Mediator without any type; for Christ having come in the flesh, is no longer covered with types.

2. *In the promise of grace* concerning the remission of sins, and eternal life granted freely to such as believe by and for the sake of Christ, which promise was common to those who lived under the old covenant, as well as to us; although it is now delivered more clearly, for God promises the same grace to all that believe in the Mediator. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." "I will be a God unto thee and thy seed." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they." (Gen. 3: 15; 17: 7. John 3: 36. Acts 15; 11.) We here speak of the promise of grace in general, and not of the circumstances of grace particularly.

3. *In the condition in respect to ourselves.* In each covenant, God requires from men faith and obedience. "Walk before me and be thou perfect." "Repent and believe the gospel." (Gen. 17: 1. Mark 1: 15.) The new covenant, therefore, agrees with the old in that which relates to the principal conditions, both on the part of God, and on the part of man.

The two covenants differ, 1. *In the promises of temporal blessings.* The old covenant had many special promises in relation to blessings of a temporal character, such as the promise of the land of Canaan, which was to be given to the Church — the form of the ceremonial worship, and of the Mosaic polity, which were to be preserved in the land even to the time of the Messiah — the birth of the Messiah from that people, &c. But the new covenant has no such special promises of temporal blessings, but only such as are general, because God will preserve his church even to the end, and will always provide for it a certain resting place.

2. *In the circumstance of the promise of grace.* In the old covenant, the faithful were received into the favor of God, on account of the Messiah that was to come, and the sacrifice which he would offer; in the new, the same blessing is obtained for the sake of the Messiah who has already come, and for the sacrifice which he has already offered in our behalf.

3. *In the rites, or signs, which are added to the promise of grace.* In the old covenant the sacraments were various, and painful, such as circumcision, the passover, oblations and sacrifices. In the new, there are only two sacraments — Baptism and the Lord's Supper — both of which are simple and significant.

4. *In clearness.* The old had types and shadows of good things to come. All was typical, as the priests, sacrifices, &c. Hence every thing was more obscure and unintelligible. In the new, we have a fulfillment of all these types, so that every thing is clearer and better understood, both in regard to the sacraments and the doctrine which is revealed.

5. *In the gifts which they confer.* In the old, the effusion of the Holy Spirit was small and limited; in the new, it is large and full. "I will make a new covenant." "If the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more," &c. "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." (Jer. 31: 31. 2 Cor. 3: 5. Joel 2: 28.)

6. *In duration.* The old was to continue only until the coming of the Messiah; but the new will continue forever. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them." (Jer. 32: 40.)

7. *In their obligation.* The old bound the people to the whole law, the moral, ceremonial, and judicial; the new binds us only to the moral, and to the use of the sacraments of Christ.

8. *In their extent.* In the old covenant, the church was confined to the Jewish nation, to which it became all those who would be saved to unite themselves. In the new, the church is established among all nations, and is open to all that believe of every nation, rank, condition, or language.

Remark. The old testament, or covenant, is often used in Scripture by a figure of speech, called synedoche, (in which a part is taken for the whole,) for the law, with respect to that part which is especially treated of. For in the old covenant, the law was enforced more strenuously, and there were many parts of it. The gospel was also more obscure. The new testament, or covenant, on the other hand, is for the most part taken for the gospel, because in the new a great part of the law is abrogated, and the gospel is here more clearly revealed.

Question 19. Whence knowest thou this?

Answer. From the holy Gospel, which God himself revealed first in Paradise; and afterwards published by the Patriarchs and Prophets, and was pleased to represent it by the shadows of sacrifices, and the other ceremonies of the law; and lastly has accomplished it by his only begotten Son.

EXPOSITION.

This question corresponds with the third question of the Catechism, where it is asked: *Whence knowest thou thy misery? Out of the law of*

God. So it is here asked: *Whence knowest thou thy deliverance? Out of the gospel.* Having, therefore, spoken of the Mediator, we must now speak of the doctrine which reveals, describes, and offers him unto us — which doctrine is the Gospel. After having spoken of the gospel, we must in the next place, speak of the way in which we are made partakers of the Mediator, and his benefits — which is by faith. First, then, we must speak of the gospel, which is, with great propriety, made to follow the doctrine of the Mediator, and the covenant, 1. Because the Mediator is the subject of the gospel, which teaches who and what kind of a Mediator he is. 2. Because he is the author of the gospel. It is a part of the office of the Mediator to reveal the gospel, as it is said: "The only begotten which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1: 18.) 3. Because the gospel is a part of the covenant; and is often taken for the new covenant.

The principal questions to be discussed, in relation to the gospel, are the following:

I. *What is the gospel?*
II. *Is it a new doctrine?*
III. *In what does it differ from the law?*
IV. *What are its effects?*
V. *From what does it appear that the gospel is true?*

I. What is the Gospel?

The term *gospel* signifies, 1. A joyful message, or good news. 2. The sacrifice which is offered to God for this good news. 3. The reward which is given to him who announces these joyful tidings. Here it signifies the doctrine, or joyful news of Christ manifested in the flesh; as "behold, I bring unto you good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2: 10, 11.)

The words επαγγελια and ευαγγελια are of a somewhat different signification. The former denotes the promise of a mediator that was to come; the latter is the announcement of a mediator already come. This distinction, however, is not always observed; and is rather in the words than in the thing itself; for both denote the same benefits of the Messiah, so that the distinction is only in the circumstance of time, and in the manner of his appearance, as is evident from the following declarations of Scripture: "Abraham saw my day, and was glad." "No man cometh to the Father but by me." "I am the door, by me if any," &c. "God hath appointed him head over all things to the church." "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." (John 8: 56; 14: 6; 10: 7. Eph. 1: 22. Heb. 13: 8.)

The gospel is, therefore, the doctrine which the Son of God, our Mediator, revealed from heaven in Paradise, immediately after the fall, and which he brought from the bosom of the Eternal Father; which promises, and announces, in view of the free grace and mercy of God, to all those that repent and believe, deliverance from sin, death, condemnation, and the wrath of God; which is the same thing as to say that it promises and proclaims the remission of sin, salvation, and eternal life, by and for the

sake of the Son of God, the Mediator; and is that through which the Holy Spirit works effectually in the hearts of the faithful, kindling and exciting in them, faith, repentance, and the beginning of eternal life. Or, we may, in accordance with the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth questions of the Catechism, define the gospel to be the doctrine which God revealed first in Paradise, and afterwards published by the Patriarchs and Prophets, which he was pleased to represent by the shadows of sacrifices, and the other ceremonies of the law, and which he has accomplished by his only begotten Son; teaching that the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; which is to say that he is a perfect Mediator, satisfying for the sins of the human race, restoring righteousness and eternal life to all those who by a true faith are ingrafted into him, and embrace his benefits.

The following passages of Scripture confirm this definition which we have given of the gospel: "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." "And that repentance and remission of sin should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 6: 41. Luke 24: 47. John 1: 17.)

II. Has the Gospel always been known in the Church, or is it a new doctrine?

The gospel sometimes signifies the doctrine concerning the promise of grace, and the remission of sins to be granted freely, on account of the sacrifice of the Messiah, who had not as yet come in the flesh; and then, again, it signifies the doctrine of the Messiah as already come. In the latter sense, it has not always been, but commenced with the New Testament. In the former sense, however, it has always been in the Church; for immediately after the fall it was revealed in Paradise to our first parents — afterwards it was published by the Patriarchs, and Prophets, and was at length fully accomplished, and revealed by Christ himself. The proofs of this are the following:

1. The testimony of the Apostles. Peter says, "To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently." (Acts 10: 43. 1 Pet. 1: 10.) Paul says of the gospel, "Which he had promised afore by his prophets." (Rom. 1: 2.) Christ himself says, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." (John 5: 46.)

2. The promises and prophecies which relate to the Messiah, establish the same thing.

This must, therefore, be carefully noticed, because God will have us know that there was, and is from the beginning to the end of the world, only one doctrine, and way of salvation through Christ, according to what is said, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh to the Father but by me." "Moses wrote of me." (Heb. 13: 8. John 14: 6; 5: 46.) Does any one ask, How Moses wrote of Christ? We answer, 1. By enumerating the promises which had respect to the Messiah. "In thy

seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." "God shall raise up a prophet," &c. "A star shall rise out of Jacob." "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come." (Gen. 12: 3. Deut. 10: 15. Num. 24: 17. Gen. 49: 10.) 2. He restricted these promises to a certain family from which the Messiah was to be born; and to which the promise was afterwards more frequently referred, and spoken of. 3. The whole Levitical priesthood, and ceremonial worship, as sacrifices, oblations, the altar, the temple, and other things which Moses described, all looked forward to Christ. The kings and kingdom of the Jewish nation were types of Christ, and of his kingdom. Hence Moses wrote many things of Christ.

Obj. 1. Paul declares the gospel was promised through the prophets; and Peter says that the prophets prophecied of the grace that should come unto us. Therefore the gospel has not always been. Ans. We grant that the gospel has not always been, if we understand by it the doctrine of the promise of grace as fulfilled through the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, and as it respects the clearness and evidence of this doctrine; for in ancient times the gospel was not, but was only promised by the prophets: 1. As concerning the fulfillment of those things which, in the Old Testament, were predicted of the Messiah. 2. In regard to the clearer knowledge of the promise of grace. 3. In respect to the more copious outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit; that is, the gospel then was not the announcement of Christ already come, dead, risen again, and seated at the right hand of the Father, as it now is; but it was a preaching of Christ, who would at some future time come, and accomplish all these things. Nevertheless, there was a gospel, that is, there was a joyful announcement of the benefits of the Messiah that was to come, sufficient for the salvation of the ancient fathers, as it is said, "Abraham saw my day, and rejoiced." "To him gave all the prophets witness." "Christ is the end of the law." (John 8: 56. Acts 10: 43. Rom. 10: 4.)

Obj. 2. The apostle Paul says, the gospel was the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, and that in other ages it was not made known to the sons of men. (Rom. 16: 25. Eph. 3; 5.) Ans. This objection contains an incorrect division, inasmuch as it disjoins things which ought not to be separated. For the apostle adds, in connection with the above, *as it is now;* which ought not to be omitted, because it shows that in former times the gospel was also known, although less clearly, and to fewer persons, than it now is. The objection is also weak, in affirming that to be strictly so, which was only declared such in a certain respect: for it does not follow, that it was then altogether unknown, because it is now more clearly perceived, and that by many more persons. It was known to the fathers, although not so clearly as to us. Hence the importance of the distinction between the words επαγγελια and ευαγγελιον, as above expressed.

Obj. 3. The law came by Moses, grace and truth by Jesus Christ. Therefore the gospel has not always been known. Ans. Grace and truth did indeed come through Christ, viz, in respect to the fulfillment of types, and the full exhibition and copious application of those things which were formerly promised in the Old Testament. But it does not follow from this, that the ancient fathers were entirely destitute of this grace: for unto them also the same grace was applied by, and on account of Christ, who would subsequently appear in the flesh, although it was given in smaller mea-

sures to them than to us. For, whatever grace and true knowledge of God has ever come to men, has come through Christ, as it is said, "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "No man cometh to the Father, but by me." "Without me ye can do nothing." (John 1: 18; 14: 6; 15: 5.)

But it is said, the law was by Moses; therefore the gospel was not by him. Ans. This is so declared, because it was the principal part of his office to publish the law; yet he also taught the gospel, because he wrote and spoke of Christ, although more obscurely, as has been shown. But it was the peculiar office of Christ to publish the gospel, although he at the same time taught the law, but not principally, as did Moses: for he took away from the moral law the corruptions and glosses of false teachers — he fulfilled the ceremonial law, and abrogated it, together with the judicial law.

III. In what does the Gospel differ from the Law?

The gospel and the law agree in this, that they are both from God, and that there is something revealed in each concerning the nature, will, and works of God. There is, however, a very great difference between them:

1. *In the revelations which they contain;* or, as it respects the manner in which the revelation peculiar to each is made known. The law was engraven upon the heart of man in his creation, and is therefore known to all naturally, although no other revelation were given. "The Gentiles have the work of the law written in their hearts." (Rom. 2: 15.) The gospel is not known naturally, but is divinely revealed to the Church alone through Christ, the Mediator. For no creature could have seen or hoped for that mitigation of the law concerning satisfaction for our sins through another, if the Son of God had not revealed it. "No man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee." "The Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (Matt. 11: 27; 16: 17.)

2. *In the kind of doctrine, or subject peculiar to each.* The law teaches us what we ought to be, and what God requires of us, but it does not give us the ability to perform it, nor does it point out the way by which we may avoid what is forbidden. But the gospel teaches us in what manner we may be made such as the law requires: for it offers unto us the promise of grace, by having the righteousness of Christ imputed to us through faith, and that in such a way as if it were properly ours, teaching us that we are just before God, through the imputation of Christ's righteousness. The law says, "Pay what thou owest." "Do this, and live." (Matt. 18: 28. Luke 10: 28.) The gospel says, "Only believe." (Mark 5: 36.)

3. *In the promises.* The law promises life to those who are righteous in themselves, or on the condition of righteousness, and perfect obedience. "He that doeth them, shall live in them." "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." (Lev. 18: 5. Matt. 19: 17.) The gospel, on the other hand, promises life to those who are justified by faith in Christ, or on the condition of the righteousness of Christ, applied unto us by faith. The law and gospel are, however, not opposed to each other in these respects: for although the law requires us to keep the commandments if we would enter into life, yet it does not exclude us from life if another perform these things for us. It does indeed propose a way of satisfaction,

which is through ourselves, but it does not forbid the other, as has been shown.

4. *They differ in their effects.* The law, without the gospel, is the letter which killeth, and is the ministration of death: "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." "The law worketh wrath; and the letter killeth." (Rom. 3: 20; 4: 15. 2 Cor. 3: 6.) The outward preaching, and simple knowledge of what ought to be done, is known through the letter: for it declares our duty, and that righteousness which God requires; and, whilst it neither gives us the ability to perform it, nor points out the way through which it may be attained, it finds fault with, and condemns our righteousness. But the gospel is the ministration of life, and of the Spirit, that is, it has the operations of the Spirit united with it, and quickens those that are dead in sin, because it is through the gospel that the Holy Spirit works faith and life in the elect. "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation," &c. (Rom. 1: 16.)

Obj. There is no precept, or commandment belonging to the gospel, but to the law. The preaching of repentance is a precept. Therefore the preaching of repentance does not belong to the gospel, but to the law. Ans. We deny the major, if it is taken generally; for this precept is peculiar to the gospel, which commands us to believe, to embrace the benefits of Christ, and to commence new obedience, or that righteousness which the law requires. If it be objected that the law also commands us to believe in God, we reply that it does this only in general, by requiring us to give credit to all the divine promises, precepts and denunciations, and that with a threatening of punishment, unless we do it. But the gospel commands us expressly and particularly to embrace, by faith, the promise of grace; and also exhorts us by the Holy Spirit, and by the Word, to walk worthy of our heavenly calling. This however it does only in general, not specifying any duty in particular, saying *thou shalt do this, or that*, but it leaves this to the law; as, on the contrary, it does not say in general, *believe all the promises of God*, leaving this to the law; but it says in particular, *Believe this promise; fly to Christ, and thy sins shall be forgiven thee.*

IV. What are the proper effects of the Gospel?

The proper effects of the gospel are —

1. Faith; because "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." "The gospel is the ministration of the Spirit." "The power of God unto salvation." (Rom. 10: 17. 2 Cor. 3: 8. Rom. 1: 16.)

2. Through faith, our entire conversion to God, justification, regeneration and salvation; for through faith we receive Christ, with all his benefits.

V. From what does the truth of the Gospel appear?

The truth of the gospel appears —

1. From the testimony of the Holy Ghost.

2. From the prophecies which were uttered by the prophets.

3. From the fulfillment of these prophecies, which took place under the New Testament dispensation.

4. From the miracles by which the doctrine of the gospel was confirmed.

5. By the testimony of the gospel itself; because it alone shows the way of escape from sin, and ministers solid comfort to the wounded conscience.

SEVENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 20. Are all men, then, as they perished in Adam, saved by Christ?

Answer. No; only those who are ingrafted into him, and receive all his benefits by a true faith.

EXPOSITION.

Having explained the mode of our deliverance through Christ, we must now inquire carefully who are made partakers of this deliverance, and in what manner it is effected; whether all, or only some are made partakers thereof. If none are made partakers of it, it has been accomplished in vain. This twentieth question is, therefore, preparatory to the doctrine of faith, without which neither the Mediator, nor the preaching of the gospel, would be of any advantage. At the same time it provides a remedy against carnal security, and furnishes an answer to that base calumny which makes Christ the minister of sin.

The answer to this question consists of two parts: — Salvation through Christ is not bestowed upon all who perished in Adam; but only upon those who, by a true faith, are ingrafted into Christ, and receive all his benefits.

The first part of this answer is clearly proven by experience, and the word of God. "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3: 36; 3: 3. Matt. 7: 21.) The reason why all are not saved through Christ, is not because of any insufficiency of merit and grace in him — for the atonement of Christ is for the sins of the whole world, as it respects the dignity and sufficiency of the satisfaction which he made — but it arises from unbelief; because men reject the benefits of Christ offered in the gospel, and so perish by their own fault, and not because of any insufficiency in the merits of Christ.

The other part of the answer is also evident from the Scriptures. "As many as received him to them, gave he power to become the sons of God." "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." (John 1: 12. Is. 53: 11.) The reason why only those who believe are saved, is, because they alone lay hold of, and embrace the benefits of Christ; and because in them alone God secures the end for which he graciously delivered his Son to death; for only those that believe know the mercy and grace of God, and return suitable thanks to him.

The sum of this whole matter is therefore this: that although the satisfaction of Christ, the mediator for our sins, is perfect, yet all do not obtain deliverance through it, but only those who believe the gospel, and apply to themselves the merits of Christ by a true faith.

Obj. 1. Grace exceeds sin. Therefore if all have perished by the sin of Adam, much more ought all to be saved by the grace of Christ. We reply to the antecedent: Grace exceeds sin as regards the satisfaction, but not as regards the application. That all are, therefore, not saved through the grace of Christ, is to be ascribed to the unbelief of those who reject the grace that is freely offered.

Obj. 2. All those ought to be received into favor for whose offences a sufficient satisfaction has been made. Christ has made a sufficient satisfaction for the offences of all men. Therefore all ought to be received into favor; and if this is not done, God is either unjust to men, or else there is something detracted from the merit of Christ. Ans. The major is true, unless some condition is added to the satisfaction; as, that only those are saved through it, who apply it unto themselves by faith. But this condition is expressly added, where it is said, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3: 16.)

Obj. 3. Adam subjected all to condemnation; but Christ saves only a portion of the human race. Therefore there is greater power in the sin of Adam to condemn, than there is in the satisfaction of Christ to save. Ans. We deny the consequence which is here deduced, because the power, excellency, and efficacy of the satisfaction of Christ, is not to be estimated by the multitude, or number of those who are saved through it, but by the magnitude of the benefit itself: for it is a greater work to deliver even one, or some from eternal death, than that all should be made subject to it through sin. Again: That the power of that efficacy which belongs to the benefit of Christ does not pass over to all men, just as the power of Adam's sin reaches all his posterity, is a fault in men themselves, who do not so apply the merits of Christ to themselves through faith, as they do the sin of Adam by birth, and imitation. But the reason why all men do not believe, nor apply these benefits to themselves, is a higher, and deeper question — one which does not properly belong to this place. "God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardeneth." (Rom 9: 18.) And he will so reveal his mercy, that he will also exercise his justice.

OF FAITH.

Question 21. What is true faith?

Answer. True faith is not only a certain knowledge, whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in his word, but also an assured confidence, which the Holy Ghost works by the gospel in my heart; that not only to others, but to me also, remission of sin, everlasting righteousness, and salvation, are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits.

EXPOSITION.

The subject of faith is introduced next in order: 1. Because it is the means by which we are made partakers of the Mediator. 2. Because the preaching of the gospel profits nothing without faith. In speaking of faith, we must enquire:

I. *What is faith?*
II. *Of how many kinds of faith do the Scriptures speak?*
III. *In what does faith differ from hope?*
IV. *What are the efficient causes of justifying faith?*
V. *What are the effects of faith?*
VI. *To whom is it given?*

I. What is Faith?

The word *faith*, according to Cicero, is derived from *fiendo*, which signifies *doing*, because that which is declared is performed. It is, according to him, the assurance, and truth of contracts, and of whatever may be spoken, and is the foundation of justice. According to the common definition, faith is a certain knowledge of facts, or conclusions, to which we assent on the testimony of faithful witnesses, whom we may not disbelieve, whether it be God, or angels, or men, or experience. But since, according to the most general distinction, there is one kind of faith in divine, and another in human affairs, we must here enquire, what is faith in divine things, or what is theological faith? The definition of faith, therefore, taken generally, must be given somewhat more exactly, and yet it must be such as to comprise in it all the different forms of faith spoken of in the Scriptures.

Faith, in general, of whatever kind mention is made in the Holy Scriptures, is an assent to, or a certain knowledge of what is revealed concerning God, his will, works, and grace, in which we confide upon divine testimony. Or, it is to yield assent to every word of God delivered to the church, in the law and gospel, on account of the declaration of God himself.

Faith is, also, often taken for the doctrine of the church, or for those things of which the word of God informs us, and which are necessary to faith, as when it is called *the Christian faith*, *the Apostolic faith*. It is, likewise, often used for the fulfillment of ancient promises, or for the things themselves, which are believed; as "Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." (Gal. 3: 23.)

II. Of how many kinds of Faith do the Scriptures speak?

There are four kinds of faith enumerated in the Holy Scriptures, viz: historical, temporary, the faith of working miracles, and justifying or saving faith. The difference which exists between the different kinds of faith here specified, will appear by giving a proper definition of each.

Historical faith is to know and believe that every word of God is true which is divinely deliverd and revealed, whether by the voice, or by oracles, or by visions, or by any other method of revelation by which the divine will is made known unto us, upon the authority and declaration of God himself. It is called historical because it is merely a knowledge of those things which God is said to have done, or now does, or will hereafter do. The Scriptures speak of this faith in these places: "If I have all faith so that I could remove mountains," which may also be understood of all the different kinds of faith, except justifying. "The devils believe and tremble." "Simon also believed," viz: that the doctrine of Peter was true, yet he had no justifying faith. (1 Cor. 13: 2. James 2: 19. Acts 8: 13.)

Temporary faith is an assent to the doctrines of the church, accompanied with profession and joy, but not with a true and abiding joy, such as arises from a consciousness that we are the objects of the divine favor, but from some other cause, whatever it may be, so that it endures only for a time, and in seasons of affliction dies away. Or, it is to assent to the doctrine delivered by the prophets and apostles, to profess it, to glory in it, and to rejoice for a time in the knowledge of it; but not on account of an application of the promise to itself, or on account of a sense of the grace of God in the heart, but for other causes. This definition is drawn from what Christ says in the explanation of the parable of the sower; "He that received the seed into the stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." (Matt. 13: 20, 21.) The causes of this joy are in a manner infinite, and different in different individuals; yet they are all temporary, and when they fade, the faith that is built upon them, vanishes away. Hypocrites rejoice in hearing the gospel, either because it is new to them, or because it seems to calm their minds, whilst it delivers them from the burdens which men, by their traditions, have imposed upon them, as does the doctrine of christian liberty, justification, &c.; or, because they seek, under its profession, a cloak for their sins, and hope to reap rewards and advantages, both public and private, such as riches, honors, glory, &c., which shows itself when they are called to bear the cross; for then, because they have no root in themselves, they fall away. But hypocrites do not rejoice as true believers, from a sense of the grace of God, and from an application to themselves of the benefits offered in the divine word, which may be regarded as the cause of true and substantial joy in the faithful — the removal of which single cause is sufficient to make their faith temporary.

This temporary faith differs from historical only in the joy which accompanies it. Historical faith includes nothing more than mere knowledge; whilst this has joy connected with this knowledge; for these time-serving men "*receive the word with joy.*" The devils believe, historically, and tremble, but they do not rejoice in the knowledge which they have; but rather wish it were extinguished; yea, they do not even profess themselves to be followers of this doctrine, although they know it to be true; but hate and oppose it most bitterly. In men, however, historical faith is sometimes joined with profession, and sometimes not; for men often, whatever may be the causes, profess that truth and religion which they hate. Many also who know the doctrine to be true, still oppose it. Sie wollten daß die Bibel im Rhein ſchwimme. These sin against the Holy Ghost.

Obj. But the devil has often professed Christ. Therefore he cannot be said to hate this doctrine. Ans. He did not, however, profess Christ from any desire of advancing and promoting his doctrine, but that he might mingle with it his own falsehoods, and thus cause it to be suspected. It is for this reason that Christ commands him to keep silent, as Paul also does in Acts 16: 18.

The faith of miracles is a special gift of effecting some extraordinary work, or of foretelling some particular event by divine revelation. Or, it is a firm persuasion, produced by some divine revelation, or peculiar promise in regard to some future miraculous working, which the person desires to

accomplish, and which he foretells. This faith cannot be drawn, simply, out of the general word of God, unless some special promise or revelation be connected with it. The Apostle speaks of this kind of faith, when he says, "If I had all faith so that I could remove mountains," &c. (1 Cor. 13 : 2.) This declaration may, however, be understood of all the different kinds of faith, except justifying, yet it is spoken with special reference to the faith of miracles.

That this is a distinct kind of faith, is proven :

1. From the declaration of Christ. "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove," &c. (Matt. 17 : 20.) Many holy men also have had strong faith, as Abraham, David, &c., and yet they did not remove mountains. Therefore, this species of faith is distinct from justifying faith, which all true christians possess.

2. Exorcists, as the sons of Sceva, (Acts 19 : 14,) have endeavored to cast out devils, when they had not the gift or power of accomplishing it, who were afterwards severely punished, when the evil spirit fell upon them, overcame and wounded them.

3. Simon Magus is said to have believed, and yet he was not able to work miracles; he, therefore, desired to purchase this gift.

4. The devil has a knowledge of what is historical, and yet he cannot work miracles; because no one, except the Creator, is able to change the nature of things.

5. Judas taught, and wrought miracles, as did the other Apostles; therefore, he had a historical faith, (perhaps also temporary,) and the faith of miracles; and yet he had not that faith which justifies; for Christ said of him, "he is a devil." (John 6 : 70.)

6. Many shall say unto Christ, "Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name cast out devils?" to whom he will nevertheless reply, "I never knew you." (Matt. 7 : 22.)

7. Lastly, the other kinds of faith extend to all things which the word of God reveals, and requires us to believe. The faith of miracles, however, refers merely to certain works and extraordinary events. It is, therefore, a distinct kind of faith.

Justifying faith is properly that which is defined in the catechism; according to which definition, the *general nature* of saving faith consists in knowledge and an assured confidence; for there can be no faith in a doctrine that is wholly unknown. It is proper for us, therefore, to obtain a knowledge of that in which we are to believe, before we exercise faith; from which we may see the absurdity of the implicit faith of the Papists. The *difference*, or formal character of saving faith, is the confidence and application which every one makes to himself, of the free remission of sins by and for the sake of Christ. The *property*, or peculiar character of this faith, is trust and delight in God, on account of this great benefit. The *efficient cause* of justifying faith is the Holy Ghost. The *instrumental cause* is the gospel, in which the use of the sacraments is also comprehended. The *subject* of this faith is the will and heart of man.

Justifying or saving faith differs, therefore, from the other kinds of faith, because it alone is that assured confidence by which we apply unto ourselves the merit of Christ, which is done when we firmly believe that the righteousness of Christ is granted and imputed unto us, so that we are

accounted just in the sight of God. Confidence is an exercise or motion of the will and heart, following something good — resting and rejoicing in it. The German has it, vertrauen, ſich ganz und gar darauf verlaſſen. Πιστις and πιστευειν the former of which means belief, and the latter to believe, are from πεπεισμαι, which means strongly persuaded; whence πιστ υειν, even among profane writers, signifies to wax confident, or to rest upon any thing; as we read in Phocilides, "*Believe not the people, for the multitude is deceitful.*" And in Demosthenes, "*Thou art confident in thyself, &c.*

Justifying faith differs from historical, because it always includes that which is historical. Historical faith is not sufficient for our justification. The same thing may also be said of the other two kinds of faith. Justifying faith, again, differs from all other kinds of faith, in this, that it is by it alone that we obtain righteousness, and a title to the inheritance of the saints. For if, as the Apostle says, we are justified by faith, and faith is imputed for righteousness, and by faith is the inheritance, then this faith must be one of the four kinds of which we have spoken. But it is not historical faith; for then the devils would also be accounted just, and be heirs of the promise. Neither is it temporary faith; for Christ rejects this. Nor is it the faith of miracles; for in that case, Judas would also be an heir. Hence it is by justifying faith alone that we obtain righteousness, and an inheritance among the saints; which the Scriptures properly and simply call faith, and which is also peculiar to the elect.

No man, however, truly knows what justifying faith is, except he who believes, or possesses it; as he, who never saw or tasted honey, knows nothing of its quality or taste, although you may tell him many things of the sweetness of honey. But the man who truly believes, experience these things in himself, and is able, also, to explain them to others.

1. He believes that every thing which the Scriptures contain is true, and from God.

2. He feels himself constrained firmly to believe and embrace these things; for if we confess that they are true and from God, it is proper that we should assent to them.

3. He sees, embraces, and applies particularly, to himself, the promise of grace, or the free remission of sins, righteousness and eternal life, by and for the sake of Christ, as it is said: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John 3: 36.)

4. Having this confidence, he trusts and rejoices in the present grace of God, and from this he thus concludes in reference to future good: since God now loves me, and grants unto me such great blessings, he will also preserve me unto eternal life; because he is unchangeable, and his gifts are without repentance.

5. Joy arises in the heart, in view of such benefits, which joy is accompanied with a peace of conscience that passes all understanding.

6. Then he has a will and an earnest desire to obey all the commands of God, without a single exception, and is willing to endure patiently whatever God may send upon him. The man, therefore, who possesses a justifying faith, does that which is required of him, regardless of the opposition of the world, and the devil. He who truly believes, experiences all these things in himself; and he who experiences these things in himself, truly believes.

III. In what does Faith differ from Hope?

We must not confound justifying faith with hope, although both have respect to the same blessing. Faith lays hold of present good, whilst hope has respect to that which is future. Obj. But we believe in everlasting life, which is, nevertheless, something that is future. Therefore, faith also has respect to future good. Ans. Eternal life is a future good as to its consummation; and, in this respect, we do not simply believe in it, but hope for it. "For we are saved by hope." "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be." (Rom. 8: 24. 1 John 3: 2.) But life everlasting is also a present good, in respect to the will of God, who grants it unto us, and in respect to the beginning of it even in this life, in which respect it is not hoped for, but believed, as it is said: "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath everlasting life, and is passed from death unto life." "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God," &c. (John 5: 24; 17: 3.) By faith, therefore, we are persuaded that those benefits are ours, which we have not as yet, on account of the promise of God; and by hope, we confidently look for the full consummation of these things. It is in this sense that Paul speaks of faith when he says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for." (Heb. 11: 1.) That is, it is that which makes those things hoped for, present and real; and is the evidence of those things which do not appear as it respects their consummation.

There are some who make the following distinction between faith and hope: Faith embraces the promises contained in the creed concerning things to come; whilst hope comprehends the things themselves which are future. This distinction, however, is less popular, and not as easily understood as the former.

IV. What are the Causes of Faith?

The first and chief efficient cause of historical and temporary faith, as well as the faith of miracles, is the Holy Spirit, who produces these different kinds of faith by his general influence and operation. It is different, however, as it respects justifying faith, which the Holy Ghost produces by his special working. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." (Eph. 2: 8.)

Obj. The devil has historical faith. Therefore it is wrought in him by the Holy Ghost. Ans. The faith which is in devils is indeed produced by the Holy Ghost, but it is by his general working, as we have remarked; and not by his special influence, by which he works saving faith in the elect, and in them alone. For whatever knowledge devils and hypocrites possess, God produces in them by his Spirit; but not in such a manner as that he regenerates, or justifies them, as in the case of the elect; nor in such a manner that they may acknowledge and praise him as the author of this gift.

The instrumental cause of faith in general is the word of God, comprehended in the books of the Old and the New Testament, in which, beside the Word, there are also many divine works and miracles contained. The chief and peculiar instrument of justifying faith is the preaching of the gospel. "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that

believeth." "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 1: 16; 10: 17.) Justifying faith is, therefore, not ordinarily produced in adults without the preaching of the gospel.

The cause of that faith which works miracles, is not simply the word of God, but it requires a special promise, or revelation.

The formal cause of justifying faith is that which is peculiar to saving faith, which is a certain knowledge of all that God has revealed, and an assured confidence wrought in the heart.

The object of saving faith is Christ, and the promise of grace.

The subject, or part of man in which it exists, is the understanding, the will, and the heart.

The end or final cause is, first, the glory of God, or the manifestation of his righteousness, goodness, and mercy; and, secondly, our salvation.

V. What are the effects of Faith?

The effects of justifying faith are, 1. Our justification before God. 2. Joy and delight in God, with peace of conscience. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." (Rom. 5: 1.) 3. Conversion, regeneration, and universal obedience. "Purifying their hearts by faith." (Acts 15: 9.) 4. The consequences which belong to the effects of faith, such as an increase of temporal and spiritual gifts, and the reception of these gifts by faith.

The first effect, therefore, of justifying faith, is our justification. After this has once taken place, all the other benefits which follow faith are made over unto us, which benefits, we believe, are given unto us by faith, inasmuch as faith is the cause of them. For that which is the cause of a cause, is also the cause of the effect. If faith be, therefore, the last cause of our justification, it is likewise the cause of those things which follow our justification. "Thy faith hath made thee whole." (Luke 8: 48.) In a word, the effects of faith are justification, and regeneration which is begun in this life, and will be perfected in the life to come. (Rom. 3: 28; 10: 10. Acts 13: 39.)

VI. To whom is Faith given?

Justifying faith is peculiar to all the elect, and to them alone: for it is given to all the elect, and only to them, including even infants, as it respects an inclination to faith. "No man can come to me except the Father draw him." "It is given unto you to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven; but to them it is not given." "As many as were ordained unto eternal life believed." "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called, justified and glorified." "Faith is the gift of God." "But they have not all obeyed the gospel; for Esaias saith, Lord who hath believed," &c., "for all men have not faith?" (John 6: 44. Matt. 13: 11. Acts 3: 48. Rom. 8: 30; 10: 16. Eph. 2: 8. 2 Thes. 3: 2.)

Temporary faith, as well as the faith of miracles, is given to those who are members of the visible church only, that is, to hypocrites. "Have we not in thy name done many wonderful works: cast out devils?" &c. (Matt. 7: 22.) The faith of miracles, however, which was possessed by many in the primitive church, has now disappeared from the church, inasmuch as the doctrine of the gospel has been sufficiently confirmed by miracles.

Historical faith may be possessed even by those who are out of the church, and also by devils.

Obj. 1. Historical faith is a good work — the devils possess this faith — therefore they have good works. We reply to the major proposition thus: Historical faith is a good work if it be connected with an application of those things which are known, and if confidence be at the same time joined with it. And if it be said, by way of objection, that this faith is the effect of the Spirit of God, and so of itself a good work, we reply that it is indeed a good work in itself, but it becomes evil by accident, seeing that the reprobate do not receive and apply to themselves the things which they know to be true. Hence the devils are said to tremble, because they do not apply to themselves what they know of God; that is, they do not believe that God is to them what they know him to be from his word, merciful, gracious, &c.

Obj. 2. Many infants are included in the number of the elect, and yet they have no faith. Therefore, all the elect do not possess faith. Ans. Infants do not, indeed, possess actual faith, as adults, yet they nevertheless have a power or inclination to faith which the Holy Ghost works in them according to their capacity or condition. For, since the Holy Ghost is promised to infants also, he cannot be inactive in them. Therefore, that which we have said, that saving faith is granted to all the elect, remains true.

We add still further, that faith is necessary for all the elect, and not only faith, but also a profession of faith in those who have arrived to years of understanding, and that, 1. On account of the command of God. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;" therefore thou shalt reverence and profess it. "He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven." (Ex. 20: 7. Matt. 10: 32.) 2. On account of the glory of God. "Let your light so shine before men," &c. (Matt. 5: 16.) 3. Because faith is not inactive, but like a fruitful tree, it manifests itself by profession. 4. On account of our safety. "By the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10: 10.) 5. That we may bring others to Christ. "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22: 32.)

We may know that we have faith, 1. From the testimony of the Holy Ghost, and by the true and unfeigned desire which we have to embrace and receive the benefits which Christ offers unto us. He that believes, is conscious of the existence of his faith — as Paul says, "I know whom I have believed." "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself." (2. Tim. 1: 12. 2 Cor. 4: 13. 1 John 5: 10.) 2. We may know that we have faith, by the doubts and conflicts which we experience, if we are of the number of the faithful. 3. From the effect of faith, which is a sincere purpose, and desire to obey all the commands of God.

Obj. 3. Those who may fall and lose the grace of God before the end of life, cannot be certain of eternal life: because to be certain of our salvation, and yet not be raised above the possibility of losing the grace of God, involves a contradiction; therefore we cannot be certain of our salvation, so that, what has been said of justifying faith, that it is an assured

confidence of righteousness and eternal life, is false. Ans. The antecedent is true of those who finally fall away; for to be able thus to fall, is inconsistent with the certainty of salvation; but those in whom God once produces true faith, do not finally fall away.

Reply 1. All those who are weak, may finally fall away. We are all weak. Therefore we may all come short of the grace of God. Ans. If the righteous were sustained by their own strength, they might indeed fall and lose the grace of God, but they are continually supported by divine grace. "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." (Ps. 37: 24.)

Reply 2. God has no where declared that he will preserve us in his favor to the end. Ans. Yea he has declared it in the passage just quoted, and in many other places. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man," &c. "I am persuaded that neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities," &c., "shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (John 10: 28, 29. Rom. 8: 38.)

Reply 3. But it is said, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. 10: 12.) Therefore God does not promise perseverance, but makes our salvation dependent upon ourselves, which is to make it doubtful. Ans. There is here a fallacy in regarding that a cause which is none; for God, by this exhortation, wishes to nourish, to preserve and perfect the salvation of believers by urging them to their duty, and not to commit their perseverance to their own strength and will. Wherefore, if we now truly believe, we ought certainly to rest assured that God will also preserve us in time to come; for if he desires that we should be assured of his present grace, he will also have us certain of that which is still future, for he is unchangeable.

Reply 4. But it is also said in Eccl. 9: 1, "No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them." Therefore we cannot be certain of the present grace of God, and consequently we cannot determine any thing in reference to that which is still future. We reply to the antecedent: 1. No man can indeed know, or judge with certainty, from second causes, or from events whether good or evil: for the external condition of men furnishes no safe criterion either of the favor or disaprobation of God. 2. He may not know it of himself, and yet if God is pleased to reveal it unto him, he may not be ignorant of it. We may therefore be ignorant of our salvation, as far as it is dependent upon second causes, but we may know it in as far as God is pleased to reveal it unto us by his word and Spirit.

Reply 5. "But who hath known the mind of the Lord?" (Rom. 1: 34.) Ans. No man indeed knows the mind of the Lord before it is revealed; but after God has revealed it, we may know as much as is necessary for our salvation. "We all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory unto glory." (2 Cor. 3: 18.)

Obj. 5. Paul exhorts the Corinthians "not to receive the grace of God in vain;" and Christ exhorts us to "watch and pray." (2 Cor. 6: 1. Matt. 26: 41.) Ans. This, however, is said to prohibit carnal security, and

to excite the faithful to watchfulness and prayerfulness, in order that the certainty of their salvation might be preserved.

Obj. 6. Saul fell away finally. He was one of the godly. Therefore the righteous may finally fall. Ans. Saul was not a truly pious man, but a hypocrite. Hence we deny the minor proposition. And if it is said by way of objection that he had the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we reply that he had only such gifts as are common both to the godly and ungodly; but he had not the gift of regeneration and adoption which is peculiar to the godly.

Obj. 7. The doctrine of perseverance, and of the certainty of our salvation, produces security. Ans. It produces by itself a spiritual security in the elect, and a carnal security in the reprobate by accident.

Question 22. What is then necessary for a christian to believe?

Answer. All things promised us in the gospel, which the articles of our catholic undoubted christian faith, briefly teach us.

EXPOSITION.

Having spoken of faith, it now follows next in order that we speak of the object of faith, or enquire what is the sum of those things which we are to believe. Faith, in general, embraces the entire Word of God, and assents most fully to it, as is evident from the definition which we have given of it. Justifying faith, however, has particular respect to the promises of the gospel, or the preaching of grace through Christ. The gospel is, therefore, properly the object of justifying faith. It is for this reason, properly called the doctrine of those things which are to be believed, as the law is properly the doctrine of those things which are to be done.

Human traditions, the ordinances of popes, and the decrees of councils, are therefore excluded from being the object of faith, for faith cannot rely upon any thing but the Word of God, as an immoveable foundation. The decrees of men, however, are uncertain, inasmuch as every man is deceitful and false. God alone is true, and his word is truth. As it is, therefore, not proper for christians to frame or construct for themselves the matter or contents of faith, so it is not proper for them to embrace what has been conceived and delivered by others. Christians must receive and believe the gospel alone, as it is said: "Repent and believe the gospel." "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (Mark 1: 15. 1 Cor. 2: 5.) The sum and substance of the gospel, or of those things which are to be believed, is the Apostles' creed, which we here subjoin.

Question 23. What are these articles?

ANSWER.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth: And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate: Was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into Hell: The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead: I believe in the Holy Ghost: The Holy Catholic Church: The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of Sins: The Resurrection of the Body: And the Life everlasting.

EXPOSITION.

The term symbol or creed (symbolum) signifies in general a sign or mark by which one person or thing is distinguished from another, as a military symbol is a sign which distinguishes allies from enemies. The German has it: ein Feldzeichen, oder Losung. Or, it (symbola) signifies a collation or bringing together, as to a feast—zusammen schießen. In the sense of the church, it signifies a brief and summary form of christian faith, which distinguishes the church and her members from all the various sects. There are those who suppose that this summary of our christian faith, as just recited, is called a symbol, or creed, because it was collated or formed by the Apostles, each one furnishing a certain portion of it. This, however, cannot be proven. It is more probable that it was so called because these articles constitute a certain form or rule with which the faith of all orthodox christians should agree and conform. It is called *apostolic*, because it contains the substance of the doctrine of the Apostles, which the catechumens were required to believe and profess; or because the Apostles delivered this sum of christian doctrine to their disciples, and the church afterwards received it from them. It is called *Catholic*, because it is the one faith of all christians.

We must here inquire, Why were other creeds, as the Nicene, the Athanasian, the Ephesian, and Chalcedonian, formed and received in the church after the Apostles' creed? To this we would reply, that these are not properly other creeds differing in substance from the Apostles' creed, but are merely a repetition and clearer enunciation of its meaning, in which

some words are added, by way of explanation, on account of heretics, who took advantage of its brevity, and corrupted it. There is, therefore, no change as it respects the matter or substance of the Apostles' creed in those of a later date, but merely a difference in the form in which the doctrines are expressed.

There are other weighty reasons which may have led and compelled the Bishops and teachers of the ancient church to form and construct these brief formulas of confession, especially when churches were multiplying, and heresies were springing up in different places. Among these reasons we may mention the following: 1. That all the young, as well as those of riper years, might be able to remember the chief points of christian doctrine, as thus briefly summed up and expressed. 2. That all might constantly have before their eyes the confession and comfort of their faith, knowing what the doctrine was on account of which they were called to suffer persecution. It was in this way that God formerly had the substance of the law and promises expressed and comprehended in a brief form, so that all might have a certain rule of life and ground of comfort continually in view. 3. That the faithful might have a certain badge or mark by which they might then and in all future ages be distinguished from unbelievers and heretics, who cunningly corrupt the writings of the Prophets and Apostles. This was also a reason on account of which those confessions were called creeds or symbols. 4. That there might be extant some perpetual rule, short, simple, and easily understood by all, according to which every doctrine and interpretation of Scripture might be tried, that they might be embraced and believed when agreeing therewith, and rejected when differing from it.

But although other confessions were formed, the Apostles' creed greatly surpasses all others in importance and authority, and that for the following reasons: 1. Because almost the whole of it is expressed in the very language of the Scriptures. 2. Because it is of the greatest antiquity, and was first delivered to the church by apostolic men, either by the Apostles themselves, or by their disciples and hearers, and has been regularly transmitted down to the present time. 3. Because it is the basis and type of all the other creeds which have been formed by the consent of the whole church, and approved of by general synods, for the purpose of preventing and refuting the perversions and corruptions of heretics, by explaining more fully the meaning of the Apostles' creed.

The truth of the other creeds, however, does not consist in the authority or in the decrees of men, or of councils, but in their perpetual agreement with the holy Scriptures, and with the teachings of the whole church from the time of the Apostles, retaining and holding fast to the doctrine which they delivered, and at the same time giving testimony to posterity that they have received this doctrine from the Apostles and those that heard them, which agreement is obvious to all those who will but give the subject a careful consideration. The power to give new laws concerning the worship of God, or to give new articles of faith binding the conscience, belongs to no assembly of men or of angels, but to God alone. We are not to believe God on account of the testimony of the church, but the church upon the testimony of God. These things, in reference to the causes and authority of creeds, are taken from Admonit. Neustad. de Concordia Bergensi, written by Ursinus, in the year of our Lord 1581, where theological

students may obtain a knowledge of things concerning the truth and authority of ecclesiastical writers, learnedly discussed, from page 117 to 142. A short table is here subjoined.

- The writings concerning the doctrine of the church are either
  - Divine, such as have been written by the Prophets and Apostles, who were immediately inspired by God. Under this head we may include the canonical books of the old and new Testaments. These alone are simply and divinely inspired as to their words and thoughts, and are alone worthy of credit. They are, therefore, the rule of all other writings.
  - Ecclesiastical, such as have been written by the Doctors of the church. These are either
    - Public, such as were written in the name of the whole church. These are again divided into
      - Catholic, including the creeds and confessions which were written in the name and with the consent of the whole orthodox church, and which were received and approved of by the church, such as
        - The Apostles' creed, the Nicene creed, the Constantinopolitan creed, the Chalcedonian creed, the Athanasian creed.
      - Particular, including the confessions of certain churches and councils, as Catechisms, the Augustian Confession, &c
    - Private, such as were written in the name and by the private advice of some one or more persons, as Common Places, Commentaries, &c.

EIGHTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 24. How are these articles divided?

Answer. Into three parts: the first is of God the Father, and our creation; the second of God the Son, and our redemption; the third of God the Holy Ghost, and our sanctification.

EXPOSITION.

There are three principal parts included in the Apostles' creed:

The first treats of God the Father and our creation;
The second of God the Son, and our redemption;
The third of God the Holy Ghost, and our sanctification.

Obj. 1. Creation is here attributed to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Ghost. Therefore the Son and the Holy Ghost did not create heaven and earth; neither did the Father and the Holy Ghost redeem the human race; nor do the Father and the Son sanctify the faithful. Ans. We deny the consequence which is here deduced, because the creed attributes creation to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Ghost, not exclusively, or in such a manner as that these works do not belong to all the persons of the Godhead. For the Father also redeems us, because "he delivered up his Son for us;" "sent his son into the world, that the world through him might be saved." (Rom. 8: 32. John 3: 17.) The Father also sanctifies us according to what Paul says: "God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." (Gal. 4: 6. 1 Thes. 5: 23.) So the Son creates us, for "all things were made by him." (John 1: 3.) He also sanctifies us, because "he is made unto us, of God, sanctification." (1 Cor. 1: 30.) He "sanctifies and cleanses the church with the washing of water, by the word." (Eph. 5: 26.) He gives the Holy Spirit, for he says: "I will

send the comforter," &c. "He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." (Acts. 2: 33.) The same thing is also to be said of the Holy Ghost, for he also created the heavens and the earth. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them, by the breath of his mouth". (Gen. 1: 2. Ps. 33: 6.)

In making this distinction, however, we must not overlook the distinction and the order of working which is peculiar to the persons of the Godhead. The work of creation is attributed to the Father, not exclusively, nor to him alone, but because he is the fountain of Divinity, and of all divine works, and so of creation; for he created of himself all things by the Son and Holy Ghost. Redemption is attributed to the Son, not exclusively, nor to him alone, but because the Son is that person who immediately performs the work of redemption; for the Son alone was made a ransom for our sins. It was the Son, and not the Father, or the Holy Ghost, that purchased us by his death upon the cross. So in like manner sanctification is attributed to the Holy Ghost, not exclusively, nor to him alone, but because the Holy Ghost is that person who immediately sanctifies us, or because it is through him that our sanctification is immediately effected.

Obj. 2. The works which the persons of the Godhead perform out of themselves, that is, such as they perform in reference to creatures, are indivisible, that is, they cannot be attributed to any one person of the Trinity without respect to the other persons. Creation, redemption, and sanctification, are works which are external to the Godhead. Therefore they are indivisible, and consequently there is no need of this distinction. Ans. We reply to the major proposition: The works of the Trinity are indivisible, but not in such a sense as to destroy the order and manner of working peculiar to each person of the Godhead. All the persons of the Godhead perform certain works in reference to creatures, but yet this order is preserved, that the Father does all things of himself through the Son and Holy Spirit; the Son does all things of the Father through the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit does all things of the Father and the Son through himself. In this way, therefore, all the persons of the Godhead create, redeem, and sanctify; the Father mediately through the Son and Holy Spirit; the Son mediately through the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit immediately through himself, but mediately through the Son, as he is the Mediator. But the works of the Godhead, which are called works *ad extra* and *ad intra*, will be explained under the seventh division of the doctrine concerning God.

Question 25. Since there is but one divine essence, why speakest thou of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost?

Answer. Because God hath so revealed himself in his word, that these three distinct persons are the only true and eternal God.

EXPOSITION.

In this question we have contained the doctrine of the church in reference to the one true God, and the three persons of the Godhead. The

principal questions which claim our attention, in connection with this subject, are the following:

I. *From what does it appear that there is a God?*
II. *What is the character of that God whom the church acknowledges and worships, and in what does he differ from heathen idols?*
III. *Is he but one, and in what sense do the Scriptures call creatures gods.*
IV. *What do the terms Essence, Person, and Trinity signify, and in what do they differ?*
V. *Is it proper to retain these names in the church?*
VI. *How many persons of the Godhead are there?*
VII. *How are these persons distinguished from each other?*
VIII. *Why is it necessary for the church to hold fast to the doctrine of the Trinity.*

I. From what does it appear that there is a God?

That there is a God, is proven by many arguments common both to philosophy and theology. These arguments we shall present in the following order:

1. The order and harmony which we observe every where in nature, gives evidence of the existence of God. There is, as every one must perceive, a wise arrangement of every part of nature, and a constant succession of changes and operations, according to certain laws, which could not exist and be preserved, unless by some intelligent and almighty being. The Scriptures refer to this argument, at considerable length, in the following places: Psalms 8, 19, 104, 135, 136, 147 & 148. Rom. 1. Acts 14 & 17.

2. A rational nature having some cause, cannot exist except it proceed from some intelligent being, for the reason that a cause is not of a more inferior character than the effect which it produces. The human mind is endowed with reason, and has some cause. Therefore it has proceeded from some intelligent being, which is God. "There is a spirit in man," &c. "Yet they say, the Lord shall not see," &c. "We also are his offspring." (Job 32: 8. Ps. 94: 7. Acts 17: 28.)

3. The conceptions or notions of general principles which are natural to us, as the difference between things proper and improper, &c., cannot be the result of mere chance, or proceed from an irrational nature, but must necessarily be naturally engraven upon our hearts by some intelligent cause, which is God. "The Gentiles show the work of the law written in their hearts," &c. (Rom. 2: 15.)

4. From the knowledge or sense which we all have that there is a God. There is no nation, however barbarous or uncivilized, but has some notion or system of religion, which presupposes a belief in some God. "That which may be known of God is manifest in them [that is, in the minds of men], for God hath shewed it unto them." (Rom. 1: 19.)

5. The reproofs of conscience, which follow the commission of sin, and harass the minds of the ungodly, cannot be inflicted by any one except by an intelligent being — one who can distinguish between that which is proper and improper — who knows the thoughts and hearts of men, and who can cause such fears and forebodings to arise in the minds of the wicked.

"Their worm dieth not." "There is no peace to the wicked." "God is a consuming fire." "They shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences either accusing or excusing them. (Is. 57 : 21. Deut. 4 : 24. Rom. 2 : 15.)

Addenda. These reproofs of conscience, which are common to all men, may be regarded as a sufficient answer to the objection that has sometimes been brought against the existence of God, that it is a mere subtle device, invented and published by philosophers and legislators for the purpose of restraining men from the commission of crime; for if it be true that it is a mere device, why is it, we might ask, that these men who seem to have detected this fraud are most harassed by their consciences on account of this their blasphemy, as well as for their other crimes. How, too, we might ask, could the mere assertion of a few individuals be sufficient to persuade all mankind into this belief, and cause it to be maintained in all succeeding ages? And if, to weaken the force of this argument, it be asserted that there are those who neither believe in a God, nor are troubled by their consciences, we reply, that this, which they imagine, is most false, for there are none of the wicked who are free from these compunctions of conscience; for however much they may despise God and every form of religion, and endeavor to repress their fears, so much the more are they tormented, and made to tremble at every mention and approach of God. Hence we often see those whose lives are for the most part profane and secure, die in despair when they are oppressed with the judgments of God.

6. The rewards of the righteous and punishments of the wicked as the deluge, the destruction of Sodom by fire, the overthrow of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, the downfall of flourishing kingdoms, &c., are evidences of the existence of a God; for these judgments, which are inflicted upon wicked men and nations, testify that there must be some universal and omnipotent Judge of the whole world. "God is known by the judgments which he executeth." "Verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth." (Ps. 9: 16; 58 : 11.)

Addenda. And although the wicked often flourish for a time, whilst the godly are oppressed, yet examples which are few in number do not weaken the general rule with which most events agree. And if it were even so, that the wicked do not as often suffer punishment as the righteous, yet these very examples, although few in number, testify that there is a God, and that he is also displeased with the offences of others who seem not to be so severely punished. But it is not true of any of the wicked that they are not punished in this life, for all those who are unconverted are sooner or later overtaken by punishment; yea, they most generally die in despair, which punishment is more grievous than all others, and is the beginning and testimony of everlasting punishment. And although the punishment of the wicked in this life is not as great as their sins deserve, yet it nevertheless has some correspondence with the most tragical crimes of the ungodly, so that we are taught, by the doctrine of the church, that the lenity which God here uses towards the wicked, and the severity which he seems to show to the righteous, do not at all weaken his providence and justice, but rather declare his goodness, in that he invites the wicked to repentance, whilst he delays their punishment, and perfects the salvation of the righteous by exercising them with crosses and chastisements.

7. A civil compact or commonwealth, governed wisely by just and wholesome laws, could not possibly be exhibited to men, except by some intelligent being approving of this order; and as devils and wicked men generally hate and oppose this order, it must of necessity be God who has hitherto preserved it. "By me kings reign and princes decree justice." (Prov. 8: 15.)

8. Heroic enthusiasm, or that wisdom and excellent virtue in undertaking and accomplishing works surpassing the ordinary powers of man, as the dexterity and delight of skillful artificers and of governors in discovering and furthering the arts, and in devising various counsel; also such greatness of mind in performing deeds of renown, and in managing affairs, as there was in Achilles, Alexander, Archimedes, Plato, &c., all give evidence that there must be some superior and omnipotent cause that excites and urges men on to these things. Of Joshua it is said: "The Lord himself will go before thee, he will be with thee." "The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus." "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him." (Deut. 31: 8. Ezra 1: 1. Jud. 14: 19.)

9. The prediction of future events which could have been foreknown neither by human sagacity, nor by natural causes or signs, as the prophecies which had respect to the deluge, to the posterity of Abraham, the coming of the Messiah, &c., are of necessity known only by being revealed by him who has both men and the nature of things so completely in his power, that without his will nothing can be done. He is truly God, who can thus foretell what is to come to pass. "Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods." (Is. 41: 23.)

10. The end and use of things generally are not by mere chance, nor from a being destitute of reason, but proceed from a cause that is wise and omnipotent, which is God. All things now are wisely adapted and ordained to their own peculiar and certain ends.

11. The order of cause and effect is finite, nor can it come to pass that the chain or course of efficient causes can be of infinite extent. There must, therefore, be some first cause which either mediately or immediately produces and moves the rest, and on which all other causes depend; for in every order that is finite there is something that is first and before every thing else.

II. Who, and what is God?

God cannot be defined, for the reason that he is immense, and because we are ignorant of his essence. We may, however, describe him to a certain extent from the revelation which he has been pleased to make of himself; yet in giving a description of God we must be careful to include in it those attributes, representations and peculiar works, which distinguish him from all false deities.

God is philosophically described as *an eternal mind or intelligence, sufficient in himself to all felicity, the best of beings, and the cause of good in nature.* A theological and more complete description of God, the one which the church receives, is the following: *God is a spiritual essence, intelligent, eternal, different from all creatures, incomprehensible, most perfect in himself, immutable, of immense power, wisdom and goodness; just, true, pure, merciful, bountiful, most free, hating sin — which is, the eternal*

Father, who from eternity begat the Son in his own image; the Son, who is the co-eternal image of the Father; and the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, as has been divinely revealed by the sure word delivered by the Prophets and Apostles, and divine testimonies; that the eternal Father, with the Son and Holy Ghost, did create heaven and earth, and all creatures, is present with all creatures, that he may preserve and rule them by his providence, and produce all good things in them; and that from the human race, made after his own image, he hath chosen and gathers unto himself an everlasting church, by and for the sake of his Son, that by the church this one and true Deity may, according to the word revealed from heaven, be here known and praised, and glorified in the life to come; and that he is the judge of the righteous and the wicked.

This theological description of God, which the church gives, differs from the philosophical description, 1. *In perfection*, because it contains certain things unknown to men by nature, such as the distinction which exists between the persons of the Godhead, election, and the gathering of the church through the Son. It also explains more fully those things which are known from nature. 2. *In its effect*, inasmuch as men cannot by the mere light of nature arrive at a true knowledge of God, nor be excited thereby to holiness or to the love and fear of God.

This same description teaches that the true God, whom the church worships, may be distinguished from false gods in three ways: *by his attributes, personal distinctions, and works.* God has declared by his works that he is such an one by nature as his attributes import. He also shows that there are three persons in one divine essence, since, according to his works, which are works either of creation, or of redemption, or sanctification, God has different titles attributed to him, and to each person of the Godhead there is a peculiar name applied. God, therefore, differs from idols,

First, by his attributes. Out of the church no attribute of God can be rightly and fully known. Even his mercy is not properly known by those who are out of the church, because the Son is not known, or the doctrine concerning him is corrupted. Nor do they know his justice, because the wicked do not believe that God is so greatly offended at sin that any satisfaction was needed, or that redemption could be effected only by the death of his Son. Nor can the wisdom of God be known without the church, because the principal part of it is found in his word, which the Gentiles had not. The same thing may be said of the truth of God, because we do not gain a knowledge of his promises from nature; and so of all the divine attributes. The church, however, attributes to God, in the highest degree, righteousness, truth, goodness, mercy, loving kindness; which attributes of God the various sects are either entirely ignorant of, or, if they have any knowledge of them, they misrepresent them.

Secondly, by the personal distinctions of the Godhead. The heathen philosophers and sectarists neither know nor acknowledge that there are three persons in one divine essence. The church, however, acknowledges and calls upon the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, subsisting in three persons, as he has revealed himself in his word.

Thirdly, by his works. Those who are without the church have no proper knowledge of the creation and government of all things, much less have they a correct knowledge of the work of redemption and sanctification through the Son and Holy Spirit. The true God is, in these respects,

distinguished from idols. The knowledge of God, which his word revéals to the church, is also different from that which the heathen have obtained from the light of nature.

A short explanation of the description of God, as given by the Church.

God is an *essence*, that is, a thing which neither springs from, nor depends upon any thing else, but exists of and by itself alone, and is the cause of existence to every thing else. God is for this reason called *Jehovah*, as if to say, that he exists from himself, and causes all other things to exist.

Spiritual: that is, incorporeal, invisible, and imperceptible by the senses; also, living or existing from himself, and quickening all things else.

Obj. 1. But God has often appeared to men; therefore his nature cannot be spiritual in the sense just explained. Ans. God, in these appearances, merely assumed a bodily form for the time, without exhibiting his proper substance, which no man hath or can see. Obj. 2. But he was seen face to face. Ans. This, however, does not mean that God was perceptible to the natural eye, but that there was a clear perception of him by the mind. Obj. 3. But the Scriptures very frequently attribute to God the various parts and members of the human body. Ans. These representations of God are to be understood figuratively, as spoken after the manner of men. Obj. 4. But it is said that man was made in the image of God. Therefore God cannot be spiritual, as explained above. Ans. The image of God, in which man was created, consisted not in the shape or form of the body, but in the essence of the soul, in its powers and integrity.

Intelligent. The human mind, with the notions or general conceptions which it has, which are from God, proves that he is endowed with this attribute. "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?" (Ps. 94: 9.)

Eternal: that is, having an existence without beginning or end. "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." (Ps. 90: 2.)

Different from all creatures and things. God is not nature itself, nor matter, nor form, nor any part of nature, but the efficient cause of all things; neither is his essence mixed or blended with other things; it is different from and unlike every thing else. Obj. 1. All things are from God; therefore they cannot be different from him. Ans. All things are indeed from God, but only by having been created by him out of nothing. Obj. 2. We are the offspring of God. Ans. But only in respect to a resemblance of properties, and by creation. Obj. 3. The saints are born of God. Ans. This is, however, by regeneration by the Holy Spirit. Obj. 4. We are made partakers of the divine nature, according to the apostle Peter. (2 Pet. 1: 4.) Ans. This means nothing more than that God dwells in us, and that we have a conformity with him. Obj. 5. Christ is God, and has a divine body. Ans. But this is by virtue of the hypostatical union and glorification.

Incomprehensible. God is incomprehensible; 1. As it respects our thoughts or knowledge of him. 2. In the immensity of his essence. 3. In the communication of his essence, in number one and the same.

Most perfect in himself. 1. Because he alone has all things necessary to perfect felicity, so that nothing can be added unto him to increase his glory or happiness. 2. Because he has all these things in and from himself.

3. Because he is also sufficient for the happiness of all other creatures. Obj. 1. But God is said to have made all things for himself. Ans. God created all things, not for the purpose of benefiting himself, but for the purpose of communicating himself to his creatures. Obj. 2. But God employs his creatures in effecting his designs. Ans. This he does not from any want or necessity in the case, but that he may honor his creatures by making them dispensers of his bounty, and co-workers with himself. Obj. 3. We are bound to worship God. Ans. This we owe to God, and results in our good. Obj. 4. To whom that is given which is his due, to him something is added. Ans. This, however, is not true in regard to that which is due according to the order of justice, and which contributes to the happiness of the giver. Obj. 5. God delights in our obedience. Ans. This he does in as far as our obedience is an object, and not in as far as it is an efficient cause of joy.

Immutable. God is immutable; 1. In his essence. 2. In his will. 3. As it respects place, because he is immense. Obj. 1. But God is said to have repented of those things which he did. Ans. This is spoken figuratively. Obj. 2. God has often promised and threatened things which he did not perform. Ans. These promises and threatenings were always conditional. Obj. 3. But God changes his precepts, observances, and works. Ans. He changes them according to his eternal decree.

Omnipotent. 1. God can do all things which he wills to do. 2. He does them by his will alone, without any difficulty. 3. He does them, having all things in his own power. Obj. But there are many things which God cannot do, as to sin, to lie, to contradict himself, &c. Ans. But these things are indicative of weakness and imperfection.

Of immense wisdom. This shows itself, 1. In seeing and understanding himself, and all things out of himself, with one view or glance, perfectly and at all times. 2. In being the cause of all knowledge in angels and men.

Of immense goodness. 1. The nature of God is such as has been revealed in the law and the gospel. 2. He is the cause and pattern of all goodness in his creatures. 3. He is the supreme good. 4. He is essentially good.

Just. God is just; 1. In respect to his general justice, willing and doing unchangeably those things which he has prescribed in his law. 2. In respect to his particular justice, according to which he distributes unchangeably suitable rewards and punishments. 3. In that he is the rule and pattern of righteousness in his creatures. Obj. 1. God sends evil upon the righteous and good upon the wicked. Ans. This, however, will not always be the case: eventually it shall be well with the righteous and ill with the wicked. Obj. 2. God does not immediately punish the wicked. Ans. He defers punishment in their case for various reasons. Obj. 3. It ought never to go ill with the good. Ans. Not with those who are perfectly good, which is not the case with any one in this life. Obj. 4. God does certain things contrary to the law. Ans. He takes away certain things from his general will by his special, which he has a right to do, as he is bound by no one. Obj. 5. God bestows unequal rewards upon men who are placed in similar circumstances. Ans. He does not, however, give to any one his just desert.

True. 1. God has a true and certain knowledge of all things. 2. He does not will or speak things contradictory. 3. He does not dissemble or

deceive. 4. He never changes his mind. 5. Whatever he says he brings to pass. 6. He enjoins truth and veracity upon all. Obj. 1. But God has foretold things which he did not intend to bring to pass. Ans. These things were spoken conditionally. Obj. 2. God deceived the prophets. Ans. He, in his just judgment, delivered them over to the devil, that they should be deceived.

Pure. 1. His nature is most pure. 2. He loves and commands that which is pure. 3. He greatly detests and severely punishes all manner of uncleanness, whether it be internal or external. 3. He distinguishes himself by this notable mark from devils and wicked spirits. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye abstain from fornication; that every one of you possess his vessel in sanctification and honor." "Defile not yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations are defiled." (1 Thes. 4: 3, 4. Levit. 18: 24.)

Merciful. God's mercy appears in this: 1. That he wills the salvation of all men. 2. That he defers punishment, and invites all to repentance. 3. That he accommodates himself to our infirmity. 4. That he redeems those who are called into his service. 5. That he gave and delivered up to death his only begotten Son. 6. That he promises and does all these things most freely out of his mercy. 7. That he confers benefits upon his enemies, and such as are unworthy of his regard. Obj. 1. But God seems to take pleasure in avenging himself upon the ungodly. Ans. Only in as far as it is the execution of his justice. Obj. 2. He refuses mercy to the ungodly. Ans. Only to such as do not repent. Obj. 3. He does not save all when he has the power. Ans. God acts thus that he may exhibit his justice with his mercy. Obj. 4. He does not exercise his mercy without a sufficient satisfaction. Ans. Yet he has most freely given his Son, that he might make satisfaction by his death.

Bountiful. God is said to be bountiful; 1. Because he creates and preserves all things. 2. Because he confers benefits upon all, even upon the wicked. 3. Because of the free and boundless love which he exercises towards his creatures, especially to man. 4. Because of the love which he cherished towards the church, and in giving eternal life and glory to his people. Obj. 1. But the Scriptures speak of God as cherishing anger. Ans. He is angry with sin and depravity, but not with his creatures. Obj. 2. God often inflicts punishment upon his creatures. Ans. Only upon such as are impenitent.

Most free. God is most free; 1. From all guilt, misery, obligation, servitude and constraint. 2. He wills and does most freely and righteously all things, and wills and does them when and in what manner he pleases. Obj. 1. Second causes work necessarily, and yet they do not work without God. Ans. The necessity here spoken of is a necessity of consequence depending upon the first cause. Obj. 2. But God is unchangeably good. Ans. God is unchangeably good by a necessity of immutability, and not of constraint. Obj. 3. But what God has once decreed he wills necessarily. Ans. He wills them immutably, but not constrainedly. Obj. 4. God does not always do what he wills, as, "How often would I, and ye would not." (Luke 13: 33.) Ans. These and similar declarations show what God delights in, but not what he has fully purposed to do.

Hating sin: that is, God is terribly displeased with sin, and will punish it temporally and eternally.

III. From what does the Unity of God appear?

The unity of God is proven, in the first place, by the express testimony of Scripture. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, is one God." "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me." "I am the First and the Last, and beside me there is no God." "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one." "There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." (Deut. 6: 4; 32: 39. Is. 44: 6. 1 Cor. 8: 4. 1 Tim. 2: 5.) See also Deut. 4: 35. Ps. 18: 31. Is. 37: 16; 45: 21. Hosea 13: 4. Mal. 2: 10. Mark 12: 32. Rom. 3: 20. Gal. 3: 20., &c.

Secondly the unity of God may be proven by many solid arguments, such as the following:

1. There is only one God — the God whom the church worships, that has been revealed by such undoubted and sure testimonies, as miracles, prophecies, and such other works as can be accomplished only by a Being that is all-powerful. "And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I appointed the ancient people?" "Among the Gods, there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works." (Is. 44: 7. Ps. 86: 8.)

2. He who alone reigns over all, and governs all things in the same way, and so possesses supreme power and majesty, cannot be more than one. But there is no one, beside God, who is so supreme and great, that no greater can either exist or be conceived of. Therefore, he is God alone, and beside him there can be no other God. "I am the Lord; that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another." "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God," &c. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power, for thou hast created all things." (Is. 42: 8. 1 Tim. 1: 17. Rev. 4: 11.)

3. He who is perfect in the highest degree, can be only one; for he who alone has the whole and every part is absolutely perfect. God, now, is thus perfect, because he is the cause of all that is good in nature. Therefore, nothing is more absurd, than to suppose any one to be God, who is not supreme and perfect, in the highest degree. "O Lord, who is like unto thee?" (Ps. 89: 8.)

4. There cannot be more than one being that is omnipotent, for if there were many, they would mutually hinder and oppose each other, and so would not be omnipotent. It is by this argument that the monarchy of the world is ascribed to one God in the prophecy of Daniel, where it is said, "No one can stay his hand, or resist his will." (Dan. 4: 35.)

5. If we suppose many Gods to exist, no one of them would be able singly and alone, to rule all the rest, and so all would be imperfect, and not Gods; or else the rest would be at ease and superfluous. But it is absurd to suppose that God is such an one as has not sufficient power to govern all things, or who is at ease and superfluous. Therefore, there is, necessarily, but one God, who alone is sufficient for all things.

6. There cannot be more than one being that is infinite, or immense; for if there were more than one, no one would be everywhere. Hence, there cannot be many Gods, but only one God, who alone is infinite.

7. There can be but one first cause of all things. God is that first cause. Therefore, he is one God, excluding all others.

8. The highest good can be only one; for if there were besides this also another highest good, it would either be greater or less, or equal to the first. But if it were greater, the first would not be the highest, and yet it would be God, which would be reproachful to the Deity; if it were less, then this would not be the highest good, and so would not be God; and if it were equal, then neither would be the highest good, nor God.

The use, or benefit, of this question is, that seeing there is but one God, we must not worship or adore any one beside him; neither must we look any where else than to this one God for all good things; and be thankful to him alone for what we have received.

Obj. But the Scriptures declare that there are many gods: "I have said, ye are gods." "There are gods many, and lords many." (Ps. 82: 6. 1 Cor. 8: 5.) Moses is also said to have been made a god to Pharaoh. (Ex. 7: 1.) Yea, the devil is called the god of this world. (2 Cor. 4: 4.) Ans. The word God is used in a double sense. Sometimes it signifies him who is God by nature, and has his being from none, but of and from himself. Such a Being is the living and true God. Then again it designates one who bears some resemblance to the true God in dignity, office, &c. Such persons are, 1. Magistrates and judges, who are called gods on account of their dignity, and the office which they bear in the name of God, as it is said, "By me kings reign." (Prov. 8: 15.) As God, therefore, administers his government through magistrates and judges, as his vicegerents and servants upon the earth, he in like manner bestows upon them the honor of his own name by calling them gods, that those under them may know that they have to deal with God himself, whether they obey or resist the magistrate, according as it is said, "Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." (Rom. 13: 2.) 2. Angels are also called gods, in view of the dignity and excellency of their nature, power and wisdom, in which they greatly excel other creatures; and on account of the office which they exercise by divine appointment in defending the godly and punishing the wicked. "Thou hast made him a little lower than the gods," that is, the angels. "Are they not all ministering spirits." (Ps. 8: 5. Heb. 1: 14.) 3. The devil is called the god of this world, on account of the great power which he has over men, and other creatures, according to the just judgment of God. 4. There are many things which are called gods, in the opinion of men, who regard and worship certain things and creatures for gods. So idols are called gods, by imitation. "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens." "Whose god is their belly." (Jer. 10: 11. Phil. 3: 19.) But here the question is in reference to the true God — to him who is God by nature, having his power from no one else, but from and by himself. Such a being is one only.

IV. What do the terms Essence, Person, and Trinity signify, and in what do they differ from each other?

Essence, from the Greek ουσια, signifies, as it is here used, a thing subsisting by itself — not sustained by another, although it may be communicated to more. That is said to be communicable, or communicated, which is common, or which may be communicated to many. That is incommunicable

in which nothing else can participate. The essence of man is communicable, and common to many men, generically, but not individually. But the essence of God is communicable individually, because the Deity or nature of God is the same and entire in all the three persons of the Godhead.

Person is that which subsists, is individual, living, intelligent, incommunicable, not sustained in another, nor part of another. *Subsisting*, by which we mean that it is not an accident, or a thought, or a decree, or a vanishing sound, or a created quality or motion. *Individual*, that is, not man generically, but individually, as this man. *Living*, something different from that which is inanimate, as a stone. *Intelligent*, not irrational, as the animal, which although it may have life and feeling, is nevertheless devoid of personality. *Incommunicable*, it cannot be communicated, as the divine essence, which may be in more than one, and be common to more than one — personality, however, is incommunicable. *Not sustained by another*, because it subsists by itself; for the human nature of Christ is subsisting, individual, incommunicable, intelligent, and yet it is no person, because it is sustained by the Word. So the soul of man subsists by itself, is intelligent, and not sustained by another, and yet it is no person, for the reason that it is a part of another subsisting individual. It is, therefore, added in the definition, *nor part of another*.

We may now readily perceive the difference between the Essence of God, and the Persons, subsisting in the divine essence. By the term, *Essence*, we are to understand, in reference to this subject, that which the eternal Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are considered, and declared to be, singly and absolutely in themselves, and which is common to the three. By the term, *Person*, however, we are to understand that which the three persons of the Godhead are considered and declared to be individually and relatively, or as compared with each other, and which they are according to the mode of existence peculiar to each. Or, we may define Essence as the very being of God — the very, eternal, and only Deity — whilst the term Person refers to the mode, or manner, in which the being of God, or the divine essence, subsists in each of these three. *God the Father* is that Being who is of himself, and not from another. *The Son* is that self-same Being, or essence, not of himself, but of the Father. *The Holy Ghost* is in like manner the self-same Being, not of himself, but from the Father and the Son. Thus the Being, or divine essence, of the three persons of the Godhead is one and the same in number. But to be of himself, or from another — from one, or from two; that is, to have this one divine essence of himself, or to have it communicated from another — from one or from two, expresses the mode of existence which is three-fold and distinct; to wit, to be of himself, to be begotten or generated, and to proceed; and hence, the three persons which are expressed by the term, Trinity.

The sum of this distinction between the terms Essence and Person, as applied to God, is this: Essence is absolute and communicable — Person is relative and incommunicable. This may be illustrated by the following example: It is one thing to be a man, and another thing to be a father; and yet one and the same is both a man and a father; he is a man absolutely and according to his nature, and he is a father in respect to another, viz: to his son. So it is one thing to be God, and another to be the Father, or Son, or Holy Ghost; and yet one and the same is both God, and

the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost; that in respect to himself, this in respect to another.

Addenda. The essence of a man who begets another is communicated to him who is begotten, but the person is not communicated; for he that begets does not bring forth himself, but another distinct from himself. The son, therefore, is not the father, nor the father the son, although both be real men. So in like manner the eternal Father hath by eternal generation communicated to the Son his essence, but not his person — that is, he begot not the Father, but the Son; neither is the Father the Son, or the Son the Father, although each is very God. Yet, although there is this resemblance, there is at the same time a great difference in the manner in which the divine essence, being infinite, and the human, being created and finite are communicated to another, which difference is to be carefully observed; for, first, in men, in the father and the son, the essence is as distinct as the persons themselves — the father and the son are not only two persons, but also two men distinct in essence. But in God, the persons are distinct, whilst the essence remains common, and the same; and therefore, there are not three Gods, but the Son is the same God in number which is the Father and the Son. Secondly, in persons created, he that begets doth not communicate his whole essence to him that is begotten, for then he should cease to be a man, but only a part is made over to him that is begotten, and made the essence of another individual distinct from him who begets. But in uncreated persons, he that begets or inspires, communicates his whole essence to him that is begotten, or that proceeds; yet so that he who communicates, retains the same and that whole. The reason of both differences is, that the essence of man is finite and divisible, whilst that of the Deity is infinite and indivisible. Wherefore, the eternal Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, constitute the one true God; and yet the Father is not the Son, or the Holy Ghost; neither is the Holy Ghost the Son; that is, they are one God — not three Gods, but three persons subsisting in one Godhead.

This distinction of essence and person is, therefore, to be observed, that the unity of the true God may not be impaired, or the distinction of persons be taken away, or something else be understood by the term person, than the truth which God's word declares. Therefore these cautions are to be diligently observed:

1. That person, in relation to this subject, never signifies a mere relation, or office, as the Latins are wont to say, *Principis personam tueri, to preserve the person of the prince*, as formerly Sabellius falsely taught; much less does it signify he countenance or visible shape, representing the form or gesture of another; in which sense a stage-actor may play off the person of another, as Servetus of late years sported and trifled with the word person; but it signifies a thing subsisting truly distinct from others to whom it has a relation and respect, by an incommunicable property; that is, it signifies that which begets, or is begotten, or proceeds and not the office dignity, or rank of him that begets, or is begotten, or proceeds.

2. That the persons do not constitute something abstracted or separated from the essence which they have in common, nor that the essence is any fourth thing separate from the three persons; but each of them is the entire and self-same essence of the Divinity. But the difference consists in this, that the persons are each distinct from the other, whilst the essence is common to the three.

3. Concerning the word essence, it is also to be observed, that God or the Deity, or the divine nature, has not the same respect to persons as matter has to form, for the reason that God is not compounded of matter and form. We cannot, therefore, correctly say, that the three persons are or consist of one essence. Neither is it as the whole in respect to the parts, because God is indivisible; therefore, we cannot correctly say that the person is a part of the essence, or that the essence consists of three persons; for every person is the whole divine essence. Neither is it as the general to the particular, because essence is not the genus of the three persons, nor is person a species of essence. But God is a more common name, because the essence of the Deity is common to the three persons, and therefore may be affirmed of each of them. But the names Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are not applied in the same general way, because the persons are truly distinct, so that we cannot predicate the one of the other. We may, therefore, correctly say, God or the divine essence is the Father, is the Son, and is the Holy Spirit; also, the three persons are one God, or in one God; likewise, they are one and the same essence, nature, divinity, &c.; and again, that they are of one and the same essence, nature, &c. Yet, it cannot be properly said, that they are of one God, because there is no one of these persons that is not himself whole and perfect God. Wherefore the divine essence is in respect to the persons as that which is communicated in an extraordinary manner is in respect to those things with which it is common. There is, however, not a similar or exact example of communication in any thing created.

Trinity, from the Greek τριας, signifies these three persons, distinct in three modes of being, or existing in one essence of the Deity. But Trinity and triplicity, trinal and triple differ. That is called triple which is composed of three essences — trinal is that which is but one in essence, having three modes of being or subsisting. God is, therefore, trinal, but not triple, because he is only one in essence, but three in persons, existing most simply.

V. Is it proper that the Church should retain the terms, Essence, Person, and Trinity?

Heretics, formerly, already opposed the use of these terms, because they are not found in the Scriptures. We, however, correctly retain the form of speech used by the church in her early and purer days, by holding fast to these terms:

1. Because, although they are not found in the Scriptures in the very same syllables, yet words and forms of speech of very close affinity and similarity, yea, such as certainly signify the same thing, are found in the Scriptures; as where it is said, for instance, in Ex. 3: 14, "I AM that I AM: he said, thus shalt thou say, I AM hath sent me unto you." Again, it cannot be denied that the name Jehovah corresponds with the word Essence. So the word *Hypostasis* is used for person in the Epistle to the Hebrews 1: 3, "Who being the express image of his person." Neither does the church call the persons, the Trinity, in any other sense than that in which John says, "There are three that bear witness in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost." (1 John 5: 7.)

2. The object of interpretation requires that the words of Scripture should

be expounded to those less learned by other words signifying the same thing and taken from common use; otherwise, all interpretation would be taken away, if no words but such as are found in the Scriptures were used. It is proper, therefore, that the church should invent and use such forms of speech as express significantly the sense of Scripture, and her own understanding of it.

3. Because the frauds and sophisms of heretics, which they generally attempt to cover with the words of Scripture, are the more easily discerned and detected, if the same things are expressed in different words. And it is on account of the brevity and perspicuity of these words and phrases, that heretics are not able to conceal their impositions and sophisms. If there were a full consent or agreement concerning the thing itself, there would be no difficulty about the use of the words. We abhor a logomachy or contention about words. Neither is the church at controversy with heretics and sectarists merely in regard to words, but it is concerning this doctrine, that the Eternal Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God; and yet neither is the Father or the Son, the Holy Ghost; nor is the Holy Ghost the Father or Son, &c. Were it not that heretics hold this doctrine in abhorrence, they would also easily admit the words. But they object to the use of the words because they do not receive the things expressed and signified thereby.

From these things we may easily answer this objection: Words which are not in the Scriptures, are not to be used in the church. These terms, such as Essence, &c., are not in the Scriptures. Therefore, they are not to be used. We reply to the major thus: Those things which are not in the Scriptures, neither as to the words nor as to the sense, are to be rejected. But in relation to the terms Essence, Person, and Trinity, as far as the things themselves are concerned, they are in the Scriptures, as hath been shown. Again, terms that are not found in the Scriptures must not be retained, if we are sure the omission of them will not endanger that which is expressed by them. But heretics seek nothing else than with the terms to reject the doctrine, or at least corrupt it.

It is also objected to the use of these terms, that they breed contentions. To this we reply that it does this only by accident, and with contentious heretics.

VI. How many Persons are there in the Godhead?

There are three persons that subsist in the one essence of God, really distinct by their peculiar properties, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. These three are con-substantial and co-eternal — all, and each, being the one true and eternal God.

This is proven, 1. By many express declarations from the Scriptures of the old and new testaments. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." "God said, let there be light." "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." (Gen. 1: 3, 4. Ps. 33: 6.) The new testament scriptures furnish the clearest and most satisfactory testimony. "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, [that is, through and on account of me,] he shall teach you all

things." "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." "According to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ." "Through him, [Christ,] we both have access by one Spirit to the Father." "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts," &c. (Matt. 28: 19. John 14: 26; 15: 26. 1 John 5: 7. Titus 3: 5, 6. Eph. 2: 18. 2 Cor. 13: 14. Gal. 4: 6.)

2. Those passages of Scripture prove the same thing, which attribute to these three, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the name of Jehovah, and of the true God; and also those places in which certain things are spoken of Jehovah, in the old testament, which in the new, are expressly and without any limitation, referred to the Son and Holy Ghost.

3. Those passages prove the same thing which attribute the same and the whole divine essence to the three persons of the Godhead, and teach that the Son is the proper and only begotten Son of the Father; and that the Holy Spirit is in such a manner the proper Spirit of the Father and the Son, that he proceeded from both.

4. This doctrine is still further confirmed by those declarations of Scripture which ascribe to these three persons of the Godhead the same attributes and perfections; such as eternity, immensity, omnipotence, &c.

5. The same is true in regard to those passages which attribute to the three persons of the Godhead the same works which are peculiar to the Deity, viz: creation, preservation, and government of the world — also miracles, and the deliverance and preservation of the church.

6. The same may be said to be true of those passages, which attribute to the three, equal honor, prayer, and worship, such as belongs to the true God alone.

From this agreement of the old and new testaments we know and prove that one God is three persons truly distinct, and that these three persons are one God. Hence it is also correct to say that the Father is other from the Son and Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is other from the Father and the Son. But it is not correct to say that the Father is something else or another thing from the Son, and that the Son is another thing, and that the Holy Spirit is another; for to be other signifies merely a distinction of persons; whilst to be another thing signifies a diversity of essence.

We must now prove, in reference to the three persons of the Godhead, that they are truly *subsistents*, against Samosatenus and Servetus; that they are distinct subsistents or persons, against Sabellius; that they are equal against, Arius, Eunomius, and Macedonius; and lastly that they are consubstantial or of the same essence against the same heretics. Concerning the person of the Father there is no controversy. And as to the objections which have been raised against the personality of the Son and Holy Spirit, we shall hereafter notice them in their proper place.

VII. How are the three Persons of the Godhead distinguished?

We must here consider, first, what the Scriptures attribute as common to the three persons of the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which three are one God, and yet distinct in persons; secondly, what is ascribed to each one singly, as peculiar to him, and how the persons are distinguished from each other.

The things that are common to the three persons of the Godhead, are, 1. All the essential properties of God, which we comprehend in the single name of Deity, as eternity, immensity, omnipotence, wisdom, goodness, to have essence from himself, or to be God of himself. 2. All the external actions or works of the divinity, which are commonly called *ad extra*, that is, such as God exercises towards his creatures, and in them or through them, as creation, preservation, the government of the world, the gathering and preserving of the church, &c.

These persons are distinguished in two ways. 1. By their works, *ad intra*. 2. By their works or mode of operating, *ad extra*. The first are called the inward works or operations of the divinity, because the persons have and exercise them one towards the other. By these internal works or properties, therefore, the persons are first distinguished from each other. For the Father is, and exists of himself, not from another. The Son is begotten eternally from the Father, that is, he hath his divine essence communicated to him from the Father in a way not to be explained. The Holy Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father, and the Son, that is, has the same divine essence communicated to him from the Father and the Son, in an inexplicable manner.

The proofs of this are the following: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." "The only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father," &c. (John 1: 1; 14: 18; 15: 26.)

This is, therefore, the order, according to which the persons of the Godhead exist: The Father is the first person, and, as it were, the fountain of the divinity of the Son and Holy Spirit, because the Deity is communicated to him of no one; but he communicates the Deity to the Son and Holy Spirit. The Son is the second person, because the Deity is communicated to him of the Father, by eternal generation. The Holy Ghost is the third person, because the Deity is communicated to him from the Father and the Son, by an eternal inspiration or procession. This is the order in which the persons of the Godhead are spoken of in the following passages of Scripture: "Go baptize all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." (Matt. 18: 19. 1 John 5: 7.) And yet the Father is not prior in time to the Son and Holy Ghost; nor is the Son before the Holy Ghost, but only in the order of existing; for no person of the Godhead is before or after the others in time, or dignity, or degree, but only according to the order in which they exist. The Father was never without the Son, nor the Son without the Holy Spirit, since the Deity is unchangeable. It is

in this way that God has from everlasting existed in himself, and hath so revealed himself in his word.

Heretics are accustomed to ask, in relation to this subject, what the eternal generation of the Son is, and what is the procession of the Holy Spirit, and what the difference between them? And although we confess that the mode of eternal generation and procession, together with the formal and natural distinction between them is inexplicable by man, which all the orthodox fathers of former times have confessed, yet the Scriptures certainly teach the thing itself, viz: That generation is a communication of the divine essence, whereby only the second person of the Deity derives and takes from the first person alone, as a son from a father, the same essence whole and entire, which the father has and retains; and that procession is a communication of the divine essence by which the third person of the Godhead receives from the Father and the Son, as the spirit from him whose spirit it is, the same entire essence which the Father and the Son have and retain.

Both of these differ from creation, which implies the production of something out of nothing by the command and will of God; but to be conceived or begotten, and to proceed or emenate, is to produce from eternity some other or another person, from the substance of him who begets, or of him from whom the procession is, in a way that is altogether beyond our comprehension; yet so that the Son has his subsistence by being begotten, and the Holy Spirit by proceeding. Thus, therefore, we perceive the thing itself, or *that thus it is*, as far as God has seen fit to reveal this great mystery unto us, although we cannot arrive at the knowledge *why it is so*.

Concerning the question so warmly controverted by the Greek and Latin churches, whether the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, or from the Father only, we shall speak hereafter, when we come to treat the doctrine concerning the Holy Ghost.

We must also here notice the phrases or forms of speech used in Scripture, and by the ancient church in reference to the distinction which exists between the persons of the Godhead themselves. Thus, it is correct to say, God begat God, but it is not correct to say God begat another God, or begat himself. It is correct to say, the Father begat another, but not that he begat another thing, or another God. It is orthodox to say the Son is what the Father is, but not that the Son is the same person that the Father is. It is true to say, that the Son is begotten, and the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father; also, the Son is of or from the Father, and the Holy Spirit is of or from the Father and the Son; also, whatsoever the Son has, he has from the Father, and received it by being begotten; and whatsoever the Holy Spirit has, he has from the Father and the Son, and received it by proceeding; also, the Son and the Holy Spirit have a beginning in respect to their person, and have their essence communicated from another; but it is not true to say that they have a beginning in respect to their essence, or they are essenced, or have their essence produced from the Father, or from some other person. It is orthodox to say, the first person of the Godhead begat the second of his own essence, and the third person proceeded from the first and second, but not, the divine essence begot a divine essence, or the person is begotten or proceeded from the essence. It is proper to say, the divine essence is communicated, but

not to say, the divine essence is begotten or proceeds, because to be communicated, and to be begotten, are not the same thing; for, not whatsoever is communicated to the begotten, is begotten, but that is begotten to which the substance of him that begets is communicated.

There is another distinction between the persons of the Godhead, arising out of the former, which consists in the order in which the persons of the Godhead operate, *ad extra*, which embraces those actions which they exercise out of themselves, towards their creatures, and in them, and by them. These works are indeed wrought by the common will and power of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but yet the same order is preserved among the persons of the Godhead, in working, which there is as it respects their existence. The Father is the fountain, as of the persons so also of the working, of the Son and Holy Ghost, and does all things not by any other, that is, not by another working through him, not by the will of another preventing his, or communicating to him power, or efficacy — but as existing of himself, so also knowing, working, &c., of himself. But the Son and Holy Ghost do not work of themselves, but by themselves, that is, the Son works, the Father's will going before; the Holy Ghost works, the will of the Father and of the Son going before. The Father works by the Son and Holy Ghost, and sends them, but he himself is not sent by them. The Son works through the Holy Spirit, sends him from the Father into the hearts of those that believe, but is not himself sent by the Holy Spirit, but of the Father. The Holy Spirit works and is sent from both the Father and the Son — not from himself. "All things were made by him." "The Son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself." "Whom the Father will send in my name." "Whom I will send unto you from the Father." (John 1: 3; 5: 19; 8: 42; 14: 26; 15: 26.)

But when the Son and Holy Ghost are said to be sent, we must not understand it in the sense of a local motion, or as though it indicated a change in God himself; but it must be understood of his eternal will, and decree to accomplish something by the Son and Holy Ghost; and of the execution and manifestation of his will through the working of the Son and Holy Ghost. So the Son says that he was sent into the world by the Father — that he came down from heaven, and yet that he was in heaven, when he was upon the earth. So the Holy Spirit, although he existed before, and dwelt in the Apostles, yet it is said that he was sent upon them on the day of Pentecost. Each of these persons was, therefore, sent into the world, not because they began to exist where they did not exist before; but because they accomplished in the world what was the will of the Father, and showed themselves present and efficacious according to the will of the Father. Thus it is said, "God sent forth his Son made of a woman." "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. 4: 4, 6.)

VIII. Why is it necessary that the Church should hold fast to the Doctrine of the Trinity.

This doctrine of the Trinity should be taught and maintained in the church: 1. *On account of the glory of God*, that he may thus be distin-

guished from idols, with whom he will not be confounded; and that he may be known and worshipped as such an one as he has revealed himself to be. 2. *On account of our comfort and salvation;* for no one is saved without a knowledge of God the Father. But the Father is not known without the Son. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." (John 1: 18. 1 John 2: 23.) Again, no man is saved without faith in the Son of God, our Mediator. "This is the true God, and eternal life." "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" (1 John 5: 20. Rom. 10: 14.) Likewise, no man is sanctified and saved without a knowledge of the Holy Spirit; for he who does not receive the Holy Spirit is not saved, according to the declaration of Scripture, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. 8: 9.) But no one receives the Holy Ghost who is ignorant of him, according as it is said, "Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." (John 14: 17.) Wherefore, he who does not know the Holy Spirit cannot be saved. It is necessary, then, that all who will be saved, should have a knowledge of the one God, the eternal Father, the co-eternal Son, and the co-eternal Holy Ghost; for unless he is known as such an one as he has revealed himself, he does not communicate himself unto us, neither can we expect eternal life from him.

Objections of heretics, against the doctrine of the Trinity.

1. One essence is not three persons, because that one should be three, implies a contradiction. Jehovah is one essence. Therefore, there are not three persons. Ans. The major is true of a created or finite essence, which cannot be the one same and whole substance of three persons; but it is not true in regard to the essence of the Deity, which is infinite, individual, and most simple. Reply. A most simple essence cannot be the essence of three persons. God is a most simple essence, as is admitted in the above answer. Therefore, it cannot be three persons. Ans. The major is true of an essence, a certain part of which constitutes another person, or which may be multiplied into a number of persons; but it is false when understood of such an essence as that which is the same and entire in each single person. The simplicity of such an essence is not in the least impaired by the number and distinction of the persons.

2. Where there are three, and one, there are four, distinct things. In God there are three persons and one essence. Therefore, there are four distinct things in God, which is absurd. Ans. Where there are three, and one really distinct, there are four. But in God, the persons are not really distinct from the essence; for the three persons of the Godhead are one and the same divine essence. They differ from it, and from each other, only in the mode of subsisting.

3. To attach three names to one substance is Sabellianism. The doctrine of the Trinity attributes three names to one substance. Therefore, it is the heresy of Sabellius. Ans. There are four terms in this syllogism; for the term, substance, in the major, either signifies a person, and in the minor an essence, or else one of the propositions is false.

4. He who is the whole Deity, beside him there is no person, in whom the whole Deity is, in a like manner. The Father is the whole Deity. Therefore, the whole Deity is not in another person. Ans. We deny the major proposition, because the same Deity which is entire in the Father, is also entire in the Son, and Holy Spirit, on account of the immensity of the divine essence, of which there is neither more nor less in each person, than in two, or the three.

5. Those persons to whom distinct operations are ascribed, must have distinct essences. There are distinct internal operations ascribed to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Therefore, their essences are distinct. Ans. The major is true of persons having a finite essence, but false when understood of divine persons.

6. The divine essence is incarnate. The three persons are the divine essence. Therefore, the three persons are incarnate, which is not true. Ans. The major speaks nothing of the divine nature generally, because the divine essence is incarnate in the person of the Son alone. We have, therefore, mere particulars, from which nothing can be concluded.

7. Jehovah, or the true God, is the Trinity. The Father is Jehovah. Therefore, he is the Trinity — that is, all the three persons. Ans. Here, again, the major declares nothing generally; for, not whatever is Jehovah is the Trinity. Therefore, nothing can be inferred from what is here said.

8. No abstract term signifies substance. Trinity is such an abstract term. Therefore it signifies no substance. Ans. The major is false; for Deity, and humanity, are also abstract terms, and yet they signify substance.

NINTH LORD'S DAY.

OF GOD THE FATHER.

Question 26. What believest thou when thou sayest, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth?"

Answer. That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (who of nothing made heaven and earth, with all that is in them, who likewise upholds and governs the same by his eternal counsel and providence,) is for the sake of Christ his Son, my God and my Father; on whom I rely so entirely, that I have no doubt but he will provide me with all things necessary for soul and body; and further, that he will make whatever evils he sends upon me, in this valley of tears, turn out to my advantage; for he is able to do it, being Almighty God, and willing, being a faithful Father.

EXPOSITION.

I believe in God. To believe God and to believe in God, are two very different things. The first expresses historical faith; the latter, true faith or confidence; for when I say, I believe that God is, if I speak properly, I believe there is a God, and that he is such an one as he hath revealed himself in his word, viz: a spiritual essence, omnipotent, &c., the eternal Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. When I say, *I believe in God*, I mean, I believe that he is my God, that is, whatever he is and has is all for my

salvation. Or, *to believe God*, speaking properly, is to believe a certain person to be God, according to all his attributes. *To believe in God*, is to be persuaded that he will make all things attributed to him subservient to my salvation, for the sake of his Son.

In God. The name of God is here taken essentially for God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; because the phrase *I believe*, with the particle *in*, is referred in the same manner to all the three persons of the Godhead; for the reason that we do not believe in the Son and Holy Ghost less than we do in the Father.

Father. When the name of the Father is opposed to the Son, it is taken personally, and signifies the first person of the Godhead, as here in the creed; but when it is opposed to creatures it must be understood essentially, and signifies the whole divine essence, as in the Lord's prayer, *Our Father who art in heaven.* In this sense the Son is expressly called by Isaiah, "The everlasting Father." (Is. 9: 6.) The first person is called the Father: 1. In respect to Christ, his only begotten Son. 2. In respect to all creatures, as he is the Creator, and Preserver of them all. 3. In respect to the elect, whom he hath adopted as his children, and whom he hath made accepted in his beloved Son.

To believe in God the Father, therefore, is to believe in that God who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and to believe that he is also my Father, and as such has a fatherly affection toward me, for and on account of Christ, in whom he has adopted me as his son. In a word, it is to believe: 1. That he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. That he is a Father to me for Christ's sake.

Obj. 1. I believe in God the Father. Therefore, the Son, and Holy Ghost are not God, but the Father alone. Ans. This is a fallacy of composition and division; for the word God is joined with the Father in such a manner as not to be separated from the Son and Holy Ghost; a comma should be placed after the words *in God*, in this manner — *I believe in God, the Father.* This is proven: 1. Because the name God, as it is here used in the creed, signifies essentially, and embraces the three persons, which are, as if by apposition, placed in order in the creed — *I believe in God, the Father; and in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son; I believe in the Holy Ghost.* For, I believe in the one true God, who is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, yet so that the Father is not the Son, nor the Holy Ghost the Son or the Father. 2. We expressly profess that we believe in the Son, and Holy Ghost, not less than in God, the Father. And yet we do not believe in any one else, except in the one only true God. 3. Many of the Greek copies read, *I believe in one God*, to wit, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. As we are, therefore, to believe in the Father, because he is God, so we are also to believe in the Son and Holy Ghost, because they are God. The name of God is placed but once in the creed, because God is only one, but never as if the Father alone were called God.

Almighty. To believe in God Almighty, is to believe in such a God: 1. Who is able to accomplish whatever he wills, yea even those things which he does not will, if they are not contrary to his nature, as he might have delivered Christ from death, but he would not. 2. Who can accomplish all things by his simple command, and without any difficulty. 3. Who alone has power to do all things, and is the dispenser of that power

which is in all his creatures. 4. Who is also almighty for my benefit, and can and will direct and make all things subservient to my salvation.

Obj. God cannot lie, die, or undo that which is once done. Therefore, he cannot do all things. Ans. He can do all things which are indicative of power. But to lie, to die, &c., is no sign of power, but of infirmity or want of power. But defects are in creatures, not in God. Therefore, they are contrary to the nature of God. Hence, by inverting the order of reasoning, we thus conclude, God is not able to do or will those things which are indicative of weakness, and contrary to his nature; therefore, he is almighty.

Maker of Heaven and Earth. To believe in the Creator, is to believe: 1. That he is the Creator of all things. 2. That he sustains and governs by his providence all things which he has created. 3. That he has also created me, and made me a vessel of his mercy, that I should obtain salvation in Christ; and that he, by his special providence and grace, will lead me to that salvation which he confers upon his people. 4. That he has created all other things for us, that they may contribute to the salvation of the church, to the praise of his glory. In short, *to believe in the Creator*, is to believe that God created me that I might contribute to his glory, and that he created all other things that they might be subservient to my salvation. "All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's," as if he should say all things are created for us, and we for God. (1 Cor. 3: 22, 23.)

OF THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

The doctrine which treats of the works of God is properly placed next in order after the doctrine concerning God, which is also the arrangement in the creed. There are five general works of God: 1. The work of *creation*, of which we have an account in the book of Genesis, where we are informed that it was accomplished in six days. 2. The work of *preservation*, by which God sustains heaven and earth, and all things which he has created, so that they do not fall into ruin. 3. The work of *government*, whereby, through his great wisdom, he directs and governs all things in the world. 4. The work of *restitution*, by which he repairs, in Christ, all things which are subject to corruption, by reason of the sin of man. 5. The work of *perfection*, or *completing*, in which he brings all things to their appointed end — but especially does he perfectly deliver and glorify his church. We shall now speak of the work of creation, or of the creation of the world, in reference to which we must enquire:

I. *Did God create the world?*
II. *How did he create it?*
III. *Wherefore, or for what end, did he create it?*

I. Did God create the World?

We must first define and understand what is meant by the terms here used. *To create* is to produce something out of nothing. The term *world* is used in the Scriptures in four different significations. It means: 1. The structure, or frame, of the whole universe, comprising heaven, earth,

and all things which are in them. "The world was made by him." (John 1: 10.) 2. Worldly concupiscence. 3. The ungodly, or unregenerate, who are in the world. (John 17: 9.) 4. Those who are chosen out of the world. "That the world may believe that thou hast sent me." "God so loved the world." (John 17: 21; 3: 16.)

That God created the world, we know: *First*, from the testimony of the holy Scripture, as, for instance, from the history of the creation as written by Moses. Also, from other passages of Scripture, and especially the following: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth." "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." (Ps. 33: 6, 9.) There are other places also, in the Psalms, and elsewhere, where the wonderful works of God are more largely spoken of, and where the principal parts of the world, which God created, are dwelt upon, in order that we may, by a proper consideration of them, be led to trust in God. (Ps. 104, 113, 124, 136, 146.) God himself shewed unto Job his marvellous and inconceivable works, as they appear in the heavens and earth, in connection with other things which he had created, that he might declare his justice, power, and providence. (Job 38 and 39.)

Secondly, beside the testimony of the Scriptures, there are many other arguments which prove in the most satisfactory manner, that the world was created by God; among which we may mention the following: 1. The origin of nations, as given by Moses, shows this, which account could not have been invented by him, when there were some remembrances of it still in the minds of many, which, however, in the course of time became lost. 2. The novelty of all other histories as compared with the antiquity of sacred history. 3. The age of man decreasing, shows that there was at first a greater strength in nature, and that it has decreased hitherto not without some first cause. 4. The certain course of time from the beginning of the world, down to the coming of the Messiah. 5. The constitution and preservation of commonwealths. 6. The order of things in nature, which must, of necessity, have been produced by some intelligent mind — superior to all things. 7. The excellency of the mind of man and of angels. These intelligent beings have a beginning. They must, therefore, have sprung from some intelligent cause. 8. The natural principles and notions which are engraven upon our hearts. 9. The chidings, or reproofs of conscience in the ungodly. 10. The ends of all things wisely ordered. 11. Finally, all the other arguments which prove that there is a God, prove also that the world was created by him.

Thirdly, there are, also, philosophical arguments, which go to prove that the world was created, and that by God, although they cannot prove when it was created. 1. There is, in nature, no infinite progress of causes and effects; otherwise, nature would never attain its end. Therefore the world had a beginning. 2. The world is the first and most excellent of all effects. Therefore, it is from the first and most excellent cause, which is God.

But there are other questions, as, whether the world was created by God from all eternity, or in time; that is, whether it be an effect of equal perpetuity with his own cause, or had it at some time a beginning, prior to which it had no existence? Also, if there was a time when the world did not exist, was it necessary that God should create it?

Also, whether it shall endure forever; and if so, will it remain the same, or will it be changed? These, and similar questions, cannot be decided by philosophy; and the reason is because all these things depend upon the will of the first mover, which is God, who does not act from necessity, but most freely. But the will of God is not known to any creature, unless God himself reveal it. Hence it is that we find it in the church alone, whilst heathen philosophers are ignorant of it; for they cannot arrive at any knowledge of these things by reasoning *a posteriori*, that is, from a continued effect to its cause. It is true, indeed, that there is a certain cause of these effects, but it does not follow that these effects were produced by this cause either at this or that time, or from all eternity, because a free agent may either act or suspend his action, at pleasure. The sum of the proof is this: no effect, that is depending upon such a cause as acts freely, or contingently, can be demonstrated by that cause. The creation of the world is such an effect. Therefore, it cannot be proven by the will of the first mover, which is God, that it was either created from all eternity, or that it had its beginning in time.

Whatever arguments philosophers may, therefore, bring against the creation of the world, it is easy to see that they are not drawn from true philosophy, but from the imaginations of men, if the order of the generation and change of things which God established in nature, be distinguished from the creation.

Obj. 1. It is absurd (philosophers tell us) to suppose that God is idle. Ans. It is, indeed, absurd to say that he who governs the world is idle. And if it be further objected to this, that he could not govern the world when as yet it did not exist, and that he must, therefore, have been idle before the creation of all things, we reply by denying the consequence; because, if God did not, from everlasting, govern the world, yet he was not idle; for he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and constructed hell for wicked and curious men, who presumptuously endeavor to pry into the secret counsels of the Most High, as Augustin wittily answered a certain African, demanding of him what God did before he created the world; "*He made hell*," said he, "*for curious and inquisitive men.*"

Obj. 2. Every thing which has a beginning, has an end. The world has no end. Therefore it had no beginning. Ans. The major is to be distinguished. Every thing that has a beginning through natural generation has an end; for corruption does not follow creation, but the generation of one thing out of another, by the order of nature. And the power of God is certainly sufficient, that he can either preserve in the same state, or change, or reduce to nothing, as well those things which he formed out of others, as those which he produced out of nothing.

II. How did God create the World?

1. God, the Father, created the world through the Son and Holy Ghost. Of the Son, it is said, "All things were made by him." (John 1: 3.) Of the Holy Ghost, it is said, "The Spirit of the Lord moved upon the face of the waters." "The Spirit of God hath made me." (Gen. 1: 2. Job 33: 4.)

2. God created the world most freely, without any constraint. There

was no necessity in the case, but such as resulted from the decree of his own will, which, although it was eternal and immutable, was, nevertheless, most free. "For he spake, and it was done." "But our God is in the heavens, he hath done whatsoever he pleased." (Ps. 33: 9; 115: 3.)

3. God made the world by his simple command, word, and will, without any labor, fatigue, or change of himself, which is the highest form of working. There are five kinds of operations or agents: 1. There are natural agents, which operate according to the force of their own nature, without any intelligence or will; such is the operation of fire, water, medicinal herbs, precious stones, &c., the action and operation of which is marked out by nature. 2. We have other operations, or agencies, which although they are greatly controlled by nature, are, nevertheless, not without some desire or will of their own, even though the government of reason be wanting. Yet the action of these agents is of such a nature, that it is oftentimes forced from them against their will, which may be said to be true of animals. 3. Are the agencies of men, who act according to their corrupt desires and inclinations. 4. Are the agencies of good spirits whom we call angels, who act according to reason, and willingly, as men do, but who are free from corruption. 5. The highest and most complete kind of operation is that which results from an understanding and will most pure and holy; which is subject to the wisdom and counsel of no one who is superior; which is, therefore, of all others, the most free, wise, and good, and which is truly infinite, such that all other things depend upon it alone. Such is the operation or agency of God alone. "He spake, and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast." "God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." (Ps. 33: 6, 9. Rom. 4: 17.)

4. God created all things out of nothing. It was not, therefore, from any essence of Deity, nor from any pre-existing matter co-equal with himself, from which God created the heavens and the earth. For if all things were created by God, nothing is excepted but the Creator himself, so that all other things were created, not even excluding the matter out of which they were formed.

Obj. Out of nothing is nothing. Ans. According to the order of nature as it is now constituted, it is true, that one thing is generated or produced from another. It is also true that nothing can be produced out of nothing by men; but what is impossible to man is possible with God. Hence, this proposition, *out of nothing is nothing*, is not true when applied to God. Nor is it true of the first creation, or of the extraordinary working of God, but only of the order of nature as it is now established. That God created all things out of nothing, should contribute to our comfort; for if he has created all things out of nothing, he is also able to preserve us, and to restrain, yea, to bring to naught the counsels and devices of the wicked.

5. God created all things most wisely, and very good, that is, he made every thing perfect according to its kind and degree. "All things were very good." (Gen. 1: 31.) Every thing was created free from deformity and sin, and from evil under every form. Obj. But death is evil. Ans. God did not create death, but inflicted it as a just punishment upon the creature, on account of sin. Reply. But it is said, "God creates evil." "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it." (Is. 45:

7. Amos 3: 6.) Ans. These things are spoken of the evil of punishment and not of guilt. God is the author of punishment, because he is the judge of the world; but he is not the author of sin — he merely permits it.

6. God created the world, not suddenly, nor in a moment of time, but in six days. "On the seventh day, God ended all his works." (Gen. 2: 2.) But why did not God create all things in a moment of time, when he had the power to do so? 1. Because he designed that the creation of matter should be a thing distinct, and manifest from the formation of the bodies of the world, which were made out of it. 2. Because he would show his power, and freedom, in producing whatever he willed, and that without any natural causes. Hence, he gave light to the world, made the earth fruitful, and caused plants to grow out of it, before the sun or moon were created. 3. He wished to give an exhibition of his goodness and providence in providing for his creatures, and having a regard for them before they were born; to do this, he brings animals upon the earth, already clothed with plants and pasture, and introduces man into the world which he had most richly furnished with every thing necessary to meet his wants, and to administer to his comfort. 4. God created all things successively, that we might not sit in idleness, but might have an opportunity of considering his works, and thus discerning his wisdom, goodness, and power.

7. Lastly, God created the world, not eternally, but at a certain and definite time; and, therefore, in the beginning of time. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth." (Gen. 1: 1.) According to the common reckoning, it is now, counting from this 1616 of Christ, 5534 years since the creation of the world. For, from the creation of the world to the birth of Christ,

According to	Melancthon's calculation	there are	3,963 years.
	Luther's calculation		3,960
	The calculation of Geneva		3,943
	The calculation of Beroaldus		3,929

The world has, therefore, existed,

According to	Melancthon,	5,579 years.
	Luther,	5,576
	Those of Geneva,	5,559
	Beroaldus,	5,545

These calculations harmonize sufficiently with each other in the larger numbers, although some years are either added or wanting in the smaller numbers. According to these four calculations, made by the most learned men of our times, it will appear, by comparing them together, that the world was created by God at least not much over 5,559 or 5,579 years. The world, therefore, was not created from everlasting, but had a beginning.

III. For what end did God create the World?

The ends for which God created the world are, some general, and others special and subordinate.

1. The chief and ultimate end for which all things were created, especially angels and men, is the glory and praise of God. "The Lord hath made all things for himself." "Bless the Lord, all his works." "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things." (Prov. 16: 4. Ps. 103: 22. Rom. 11: 36.)

2. The manifestation, knowledge, and contemplation of the divine wisdom, power and goodness displayed in the creation of things. For, if God would be praised, it was necessary that he should create rational intelligences, capable of knowing him; and that, knowing him, they might praise and honor him. It was, also, necessary that he should create things destitute of reason, that they might furnish matter for praise. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy works." (Ps. 19: 1.)

3. The government of the world. God created the world, that he might by his providence always govern, rule, and preserve it, and so continually shew forth his wonderful works, which he hath performed from the beginning of the world, and which he now performs, or will hereafter perform; but especially that he might govern the church, composed of angels and men. This end is subservient to the second. "Lift up your eyes on high and behold who hath created these things." (Is. 40: 26.)

4. That he might gather to himself, from the human race, an everlasting church, which might know and praise him as the Creator.

5. That all things might contribute to the happiness, comfort and salvation of men, and especially the elect, and that they may be to them, each in its own particular sphere, as ministers and instruments through which God may be praised by them, whilst bestowing his blessings upon them. "Subdue the earth, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." "Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hand; thou hast put all things under his feet." "Whether the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours." (Gen. 1: 28. Ps. 8: 6. 1 Cor. 3: 22.) God, therefore, created man, for himself; and all other things for man, that they might serve him, and through him might serve God. Hence, when we make creatures occupy the place which belongs to God, we thrust ourselves out of the place which God has assigned unto us.

The use of the doctrine of the creation of the world is: 1. That all the glory thereof may be attributed to God, and that his wisdom, power, and goodness, may be known and acknowledged from the works of creation. 2. That we may withdraw our confidence from all created things, and place our trust in God alone, the author and giver of salvation.

TENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 27. What dost thou mean by the providence of God?

Answer. The Almighty and everywhere present power of God; whereby, as it were by his hand, he upholds and governs heaven, earth, and all creatures; so that herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, meat and drink, health

and sickness, riches and poverty, yea all things come not by chance, but by his fatherly hand.

EXPOSITION.

Intimately connected with the doctrine of the creation of the world, is the subject of the providence of God, which is nothing else than a continuation of the creation; because the government of the world is the preservation of the things created by God. We are not to imagine, therefore, that the creation of the world is like the building of a ship, which the architect as soon as it is completed, commits to the government of some pilot; but we must hold this as a most certain truth, that as nothing could ever have existed except by the creating power of God; so it is impossible that any thing should exist, even for a moment, without his government and preservation. It is for this reason that the scriptures often join the preservation and continual administration of all things with their creation. Hence we cannot have a full and correct knowledge of the creation unless we, at the same time, embrace the doctrine of divine providence, concerning which we must inquire particularly.

I. *Is there any providence of God?*
II. *What is it?*
III. *What does it profit us?*

The first and second of these propositions are considered under this question; the third will be considered when we come to treat the twenty-eighth question of the Catechism

I. Is there any providence of God?

There are three opinions entertained by philosophers respecting the providence of God: 1. The Epicureans deny that there is any providence respecting the affairs of mortals, or those things which are, and are done in the lower parts of the world. 2. The Stoics have devised and substituted for divine providence, an absolute necessity of all things and changes existing in the very nature of things, to which every thing is subject, including even God himself. This necessity they call fate or destiny. 3. The Peripatetics suppose that God does indeed behold and know all things, but does not direct and govern them, but only excites or keeps up the celestial motions, and through them sends down, by way of influence, some power or virtue into the lower parts of nature, whilst the operations and motions so excited are depending entirely upon matter and the will of man.

In opposition to these errors the church teaches according to the word of God, that nothing exists, or comes to pass in the whole world, unless by the certain and definite, but nevertheless most free and good counsel of God.

There are two kinds of proofs by which we may establish the doctrine of the providence of God: these are testimonies from scripture, and the force of arguments.

The testimony which the scriptures furnish in support of this doctrine is contained in such passages as the following: "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." "In him we live, and move, and have our being."

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are numbered." "God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Acts 17: 25, 28. Matt. 10: 29, 30. Eph. 1: 11.) There are also many similar testimonies of scripture which prove the general and particular providence of God; for there is scarcely any doctrine more frequently and diligently inculcated than that of divine providence. As a single instance, God reasons in the book of Jeremiah, 27: 5, 6, from the general to the particular: that is from the thing itself to the example. "I have made the earth, the man and the beasts that are upon the ground, and have given it unto whom it seemeth meet unto me." And he immediately adds the particular, "now have I given all these lands into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant."

The arguments which establish a divine providence are of two kinds. Some are *a posteriori*, which include such as are drawn from the effects or works of God: others are *a priori*, that is such as are drawn from the nature and attributes of God. Both may be clearly demonstrated, and are common to philosophy and theology, unless that the attributes and works of God are better and more fully understood by the church than by philosophy. The arguments, however, which are drawn from the divine works are more obvious; for it is through the arguments *a posteriori* that we arrive at and obtain a knowledge of those which are *a priori*.

Arguments in proof of the Providence of God, drawn from his works.

1. Order cannot proceed from a brutish or irrational cause: for where there is order, there must also be some one that orders and directs. In the nature of things there is order; there is a most judicious arrangement of every part of nature, and a succession of changes and seasons, contributing to the preservation and continuation of the whole. Therefore, this order exists, and is preserved by some intelligent mind; and seeing that it is most wisely constituted, there is a necessity that he who has thus arranged all things, and who governs them by his providence, must be most wise. "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by name." (Ps. 147: 4.

2. Man, who is as it were a little world, is ruled by a mind and understanding; much more, therefore, is the world governed by divine providence. "He who planted the ear, shall he not hear." (Ps. 94: 9.

3. The natural law, the knowledge of general principles natural to men, the difference between things honest and base, engraven upon our hearts, teach that there is a providence: for he who has engraven upon the heart of man a rule or law, for the regulation of the life, has a regard to the actions of men. God now has engraven such a rule upon the heart of man, and desires us to live in conformity thereto. Therefore he must also govern the lives, actions and events of his creatures. "The Gentiles show the work of the law written in their hearts," &c. (Rom. 2: 15.) Plautus says, "There is verily a God, who sees and hears what we do;" and Homer says, "God hath an upright eye."

4. The reproofs of conscience, which follow the commission of sin on the part of the wicked, prove that there must be a God who knows the secrets of men, punishes their sins, avenges himself upon their wickedness, and

who causes such inward fears and forebodings to arise in the mind. "Their conscience at the same time bearing witness, and their thoughts, the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." (Rom. 2: 15; 1: 18.)

5. The rewards and punishments which follow the actions of men, testify that there must be some executioner of the laws of nature. There are more pleasant and favorable events accompanying the lives of those who live in moderation, even though they be without the church, than is the case with those who live in profligacy and sensual indulgence; for atrocious crimes are generally followed with severe punishment. Therefore there must be some judge who notices the actions of men, and rewards them accordingly. "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance; he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked; so that a man shall say, verily there is a reward for the righteous: verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth." "He that chasteneth the heathen shall not he correct." (Ps. 58: 10, 11; 94: 10.

6. A great part of the providence of God consists in the establishment, preservation and transfer of kingdoms and empires. These things, however, could not take place if there were no God. "By me kings reign and princes decree justice." "That the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." (Prov. 8: 15. Dan. 4: 25.) Cicero says: "Commonwealths are governed far more by the aid and power of God, than by the reason and counsel of men." There is always a greater number of the wicked than of the good, and more who wish the authority of the law subverted than maintained. Yet civil order is preserved; and republics and kingdoms are perpetuated. Therefore there must be some one greater than all devils, tyrants and wicked men, who always preserves this order against their rage.

7. The excellent virtues, exploits and success of heroes surpassing the ordinary capacity of man, the singular gifts and excellency of artificers which God has conferred upon certain individuals, for the general good and for the preservation of human society, &c., testify that there is a God who has a care for the human race. For these are things which are far greater than any that can proceed from that which is merely sensual; and possess too great an excellence to be merely the acquirements of human industry. There is, therefore, a God who, when he wishes to accomplish great things for the safety of the human race, raises up men endowed with heroic virtues, inventors of arts and counsels; and princes that are brave, good and prudent; and other instruments adapted to the accomplishment of his purposes. And when he wishes to punish men for their sins, he takes away the same instrument which he raised up for their safety. "The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus." "The Lord doth take away the mighty man and the man of war, the judge and the prophet." "He giveth wisdom to the wise," &c. (Ezra 1: 1. Is. 3: 2. Dan. 2: 21.)

8. A providence may be inferred from prophecy and the prediction of events. He is God who can declare to men things that are yet future, and who cannot be deceived in his predictions. Therefore he does not only foresee future events, but also directs them that they come to pass, either by his effecting or permitting them: so that he has a regard for human affairs, and governs the world by his providence. "Hath he spoken, and

shall he not make it good." (Num. 23: 19.) Cicero says, "They are no gods that do not declare things to come."

9. All things in the world are directed to certain ends and constantly tend to these ends. Therefore, there is some being most wise and powerful, who constantly directs all things by his providence, and brings each one to its appointed end. "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (Deut. 8: 3.)

Arguments drawn from the nature and attributes of God.

1. There is a God. Therefore there is a providence. This is as truly said as to say, no God, no providence: for to suppose a God who does not rule the world, is to deny God. Yea, to suppose God to exist and not to govern the world, is in direct opposition to his nature; for the world can no more exist without God than it could be created without him.

2. God is so powerful that it is not possible that anything can be done which he does not simply wish; neither can it be done in a manner different from what he desires; but whatever is done must necessarily be done according to his will and direction. Therefore those things which are daily done, are accomplished according to the will of Almighty God, and so by his providence.

3. It belongs to a wise governor not to permit any thing to be done in his kingdom without his will and certain counsel. God is most wise and can be present with all things. Therefore nothing is done in the world without his providence.

4. God is most just, and at the same time the judge of the world. Therefore, he himself bestows rewards upon the good, and inflicts punishment upon the wicked.

6. God is most good; but he who is most good is also most communicable. Therefore, as God created the world from his infinite goodness, that he might communicate himself to it, so in like manner he preserves, administers and governs the world which he created by the same goodness.

6. The ends of all things are good, and ordained of God. Therefore the means also, which are necessary for the attainment of these ends, are appointed by God from everlasting,either absolutely or according to something else.

7. God is the first cause of all things. Therefore all second causes are dependent upon him.

8. An unchangeable foreknowledge depends on an immutable cause. God foreknows all things unchangeably from everlasting. Therefore he foreknows from an immutable cause, which is his eternal counsel and decree. *The sum of all is this:* God is almighty, most wise, just and good: therefore he ordained and created nothing without some special end and purpose; neither does he cease to guide and direct his works to the ends for which he hath ordained them; nor does he suffer those things to be accomplished by chance, which he made and ordained for the manifestation of his own glory. "These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself," &c. "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Ps. 50: 21; 77: 9. Is. 46: 10.)

II. What is the providence of God?

Foreknowledge, providence and predestination differ from each other. By *foreknowledge* we understand the knowledge of God, by which he foreknew, from all eternity, not only what he himself would do, but also what others would do by his permission, viz: that they would sin. *Providence* and *predestination*, although they include only those things which God himself will do, yet they differ in this, that providence extends to all the things and works of God, whilst predestination properly has respect only to rational creatures. *Predestination* is therefore the most wise, eternal and immutable decree of God, by which he appointed and destined every man, before he was created, to his certain use and end, as will hereafter be more clearly shown. But *providence is the eternal, most free, immutable, wise, just and good counsel of God, according to which he effects all good things in his creatures; permits also evil things to be done, and directs all, both good and evil, to his own glory and the salvation of his people.*

Explanation and confirmation of this definition.

Counsel. Divine providence is called in the Scriptures the counsel of God. "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever." "My counsel shall stand." "God willing to show the immutability of his counsel." (Ps. 32: 11. Is. 46: 10. Heb. 6: 17. Also Is. 14: 26; 19: 17; 28: 29. Jer. 32: 19, &c.) From these declarations it is evident that by the term providence we are to understand not only the knowledge of things present and future, but also the decree or will and effectual working of God; for the term counsel comprehends an understanding or foreknowledge of things which are to be done, or which are yet future, with the causes on account of which they are or are not to be done; and also a will determining something from certain causes. Providence therefore, is not the bare fore-sight or fore-knowledge of God, but it also includes the will of God, just as προνοια which we translate providence, signifies with the Greeks, both a knowledge and care of things.

Eternal. Because, as there can be no ignorance nor increase of knowledge, nor any change of will in God, there is a necessity that he must have known and decreed all things from everlasting. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways." "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." "He hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world." "We speak the wisdom of God, which he hath ordained before the world." (Prov. 8: 22. Is. 46: 10. Eph. 1: 4. 1 Cor. 2: 7.)

Most free. Because he has so decreed from everlasting, as was pleasing to himself, according to his immense wisdom and goodness; when he had full power to have arranged his counsel otherwise, or even to have omitted it, or to have accomplished things differently from what he determined to do by his counsel. "He hath done whatsoever he pleased." "As the clay is in the potter's hands, so are ye in my hands." (Ps. 115: 3. Jer. 18: 6.)

Unchangeable. Because neither error nor change can occur with God; but what he has once decreed from everlasting, that being most good and just he wills everlastingly, and at length brings to pass. "I am the Lord,

I change not."* "The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent." (Mal. 3: 6. 1 Sam. 15: 29. Also Num. 23: 19. Job 23: 13. Ps. 33; 11. Prov. 19: 21.)

Most wise. This is evident from the wonderful course of events, and things in the world. "With him is strength and wisdom." "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God." (Job 12; 16. Rom. 11: 33. Also 1 Sam. 16: 7. 1 Kings 8: 39. Job 36: 23. Ps. 33: 15; 119: 2–6, &c.)

Most just; because the will of God is the fountain and pattern of justice. "There is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons." (2 Chron. 19: 7. Also Neh. 9: 33. Job 9: 2. Ps. 36: 7; 119: 137. Dan. 9: 7, 14.)

According to which he effects all good things. This is added that we may know that the counsel of God is not inactive, but efficacious, as Christ declared, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John 5: 17.)

The working of God is two-fold — general and special. The *general* working of God is that by which he sustains and governs all things, especially the human race. The *special* is that by which he, in this life, commences the salvation of his people, and perfects it in the life to come. It is said in reference to both, "God is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God." "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous," &c. (1 Tim. 4: 10. Rom. 8: 14. Ps. 34: 15.) God works in both ways, either immediately or mediately. He works *immediately* when he does what he wills independent of means, or in a manner different from the order which he has established in nature; as when he supports life in a miraculous manner. He works *immediately* when he produces through creatures, or second cause, those effects for which they are adapted according to the established order of nature, and for which they were made, as when he sustains us by food and heals us of disease by medicine. "Let them take a lump of figs and lay it for a plaster upon the bile, and he shall recover." (Is. 38: 21.) It is in this way that God reveals himself and his will unto us through the Scriptures as read and preached. "They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." (Luke 16: 29.)

This mediate operation or working of God is effected sometimes through good instruments, including such as are natural as well as voluntary; and sometimes through such instruments as are evil and sinful; yet in such a way that what God effects in and through them, is always most holy, just and good: for the goodness of the works of God does not depend upon the instruments, but upon his bounty, wisdom and righteousness. That God works through good instruments, is generally admitted by the godly. There is, however, a diversity of sentiment as it respects instruments that are evil and wicked. But if we would not deny that the trials and chastisements of the righteous, as well as the punishments of the wicked, which are accomplished through the wicked, are just and proceed from the will and power of God; and unless we also deny that the virtues and actions of the wicked which have contributed to the well-being of the human race, are the gifts of God; we must admit that God does also execute his just and holy judgments and works by instruments that are evil and sinful. It was thus that he sent Joseph into Egypt, through his wicked brothers and the Midianites, blessed Israel through the false prophet Balaam, tempted the people

through false prophets, vexed Saul through Satan, punished David through Absalom and the blasphemies of Shemei, chastised Solomon by the sedition of Jeroboam, tried Job by Satan, carried Judah and Jerusalem into captivity by the hands of Nebuchadnezzar, &c.

He effects all good things. This he does in such a manner that no creature, great or small, can either exist, or move, or do, or suffer anything without his will and counsel: for by things that are good, we are to understand the quantities, qualities and motions of things, as well as their substance, because all things have been created by God; and are, therefore, necessarily included in his providence.

Permits evil things also to be done. Evil is two-fold — the evil of guilt, which is all sin, and the evil of punishment, which includes every affliction, destruction or vexation which God inflicts upon his rational creatures on account of sin. We have an example of evil under both of its forms in Jer. 18: 8. "If that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil I thought to do unto them."

The evil of punishment is from God, the author and executioner thereof, not only in as far as it is a certain action or motion, but also in as far as it is the destruction or affliction of the wicked. This is proven, 1. Because God is the chief and efficient cause of every thing that is good. Every punishment now has the nature of moral good, because it is the declaration and execution of divine justice. Therefore God is the author of punishment. 2. God is the judge of the world, and the vindicator of his own glory, and desires to be acknowledged as such. Therefore he is the author of rewards and punishments. 3. Because the Scriptures every where, with one voice, refer the punishments of the wicked, as well as the chastisements, trials and martyrdoms of the saints, to the efficacious will of God. "I, the Lord make peace and create evil." "Shall there be evil (that of punishment) in the city, and the Lord hath not done it." "Rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Is. 45: 7. Amos 3: 6. Matt. 10: 28.)

The evils of guilt as far as they are such, that is, sins, have not the nature of that which is good. Hence God does not will them, neither does he tempt men to perform them, nor does he effect them or contribute thereto; but he permits devils and men to do them, or does not prohibit them from committing them when he has the power to do so. Therefore these things do indeed also fall under the providence of God, but not as if they were done by him, but only permitted. The word *permit* is therefore not to be rejected, seeing that it is sometimes used in the scriptures. "Therefore *suffered* I thee not to touch her." "But God *suffered* him not to touch me." "He *suffered* no man to do them wrong." "Who in times past *suffered* all nations to walk in their own way." (Gen. 20: 6; 31: 7. Ps. 105: 14. Acts 14: 16.) But we must have a correct understanding of the word lest we detract from God a considerable portion of the government of the world, and of human affairs. For this permission is not an indifferent contemplation or suspension of the providence and working of God as it respects the actions of the wicked, by which it comes to pass that these actions do not depend so much upon some first cause, as upon the will of the creatures acting; but it is a withdrawal of divine grace by which God (whilst he accomplishes the decrees of his will through rational creatures) either does not make known to the creature acting what he

himself wishes to be done, or he does not incline the will of the creature to render obedience, and to perform what is agreeable to his will. Yet he, nevertheless, in the meanwhile, controls and influences the creature so deserted and sinning as to accomplish what he has purposed.

He directs all things, both good and evil. All things, including those that are past from the creation of the world — those that are present, and those that are to come, even to all eternity. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God and there is none like me." (Is. 46: 9, 10.)

To his own glory: that is, to the acknowledgement of his divine justice, power, wisdom, mercy and goodness.

And to the salvation of his people: that is, to the life, joy, righteousness, glory and eternal happinesss of the church. To these ends, viz: to the glory of God and the salvation of the church, all the works and counsels of God ought, without controversy, to be referred, because all of them give evidence of the glory of God, and of his concern for the church. "The heavens declare the glory of God," &c. "For my name sake will I defer mine anger." "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the glory of God should be made manifest in him." (Ps. 19: 1. Is. 48: 9. Rom. 8: 28. John 9: 3.)

We have now given a short explanation of the definition which we have given of the Providence of God, from which the following question naturally arises: *Is it a providence that includes all things; or, in other words, does it extend to every thing?* The answer to this question is evident, which is, that all things, even the smallest, fall within the providence of God, so that whatever is done, whether it be good or bad, comes to pass not by chance, but by the eternal counsel of God, producing it if it be good, and permitting it if it be evil. But as there are some who are ignorant of this doctrine, whilst there are others who speak against it in various ways, and so cast reproach upon it, we must explain it more fully, and show that it is in perfect harmony with the teachings of God's word.

The testimonies which prove that all things are embraced in the providence of God, are partly *general*, such as teach that all things and events generally, are subject to the providence of God; and partly *special*, such as prove that God directs and governs specially each particular thing. The former asserts and establishes a general, the latter a special providence. Those testimonies which are *special* have reference either to creatures or to the events which are daily occurring. As it respects creatures, they are either such as are irrational, whether animate or inanimate; or they are rational and voluntary agents doing that which is good or evil. As it respects events, they are contingent, or casual or necessary: for those things which occur are either casual and fortuitous, but only as far as we are concerned who are ignorant of their true causes; or they are contingent in respect to their causes which work contingently; or necessary in respect to those causes which work necessarily in nature. In respect to God however, there is nothing that is casual or contingent; but all things are necessary, although it be in a different manner as it respects good and evil actions.

A table of those things which fall under the providence of God.

- The whole world is governed by the providence of God; and in the whole world,
  - 1. All things generally, which providence is called universal, or general.
  - 2. Each thing particularly, which providence is called particular or special. The things which are specially directed are,
    - 1. Every single creature
      - 1. Irrational, of which kind some are,
        - 1 Living,
        - 2. Without life.
      - 2. Rational, such are,
        - 1. Angels,
          - 1. Good angels working freely and willingly that which is good
          - 2. Bad angels working freely and willingly that which is evil
        - 2. Men,
          - 1. Good men, doing freely and willingly that which is good.
          - 2. Wicked men, doing freely & willingly that which is evil.
    - 2. Every single event,
      - 1. Casual,
        - 1. Good,
        - 2. Evil.
      - 2. Contingent,
        - 1. Good,
        - 2. Evil.
      - 3 Necessary.
        - 1. Good,
        - 2. Evil.

It is proper that we should here append to each separate part or division of the above table, certain clear and satisfactory proofs, so as to leave no doubt upon the mind of any one respecting the truth of what is affirmed.

1. The general providence of God is established by the following testimonies taken from the word of God. "He doeth all things according to the counsel of his own will." "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." "Hath he said and shall he not do it; or hath he spoken and shall he not make it good." "Thou hast made heaven, and earth, and all things that are therein, the seas and all that are therein, and thou preserveth them all." "I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." (Eph. 1: 11. Acts 17: 25. Num. 23: 19. Neh. 9: 6. Is. 45: 7.)

2. The history of Joseph furnishes a remarkable proof of a special providence in regard to rational creatures. "It was not you that sent me hither, but God." "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." (Gen. 45: 8; 50: 20.) The history of Pharoah as recorded in the book of Exodus, establishes the same thing. "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?" "And the Lord said unto Joshua, Be not afraid because of them, for to-morrow about this time will I deliver them all up slain before Israel." "The Lord hath said unto Shimei, Curse David." "And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab, &c. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also." "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." "The Lord turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them." (Ex. 4: 11. Josh. 11: 6. 2 Sam. 16: 10. 1 Kings 22: 20. Prov. 21: 1. Ezra 6: 22.) The Lord also calls the king of the Assyrians, "the rod of his anger," and adds, "When the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion, and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not." "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" "Herod and Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined to be done." (Is. 10: 6, 12. Lam. 3: 37. Dan. 4: 35. Acts 4: 27, 28.)

3. As it respects the providence of God over irrational creatures, be they living or destitute of life, the following proofs may be adduced: "He

keepeth all the bones of the righteous; not one of them is broken.' "And God remembered Noah and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark, and God made a wind to pass over the earth and the waters assuaged." "He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry." "Your heavenly Father feedeth the fowls of the air," &c. (Ps. 44: 20. Gen. 8: 1. Ps. 147: 9. Matt. 6: 20. See also the 37th chapter of the book of Job, and the 104th Psalm.)

5. Of things fortuitous and casual it is said, "And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hands, then I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee." "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Ex. 21: 13. Math. 10: 29, 30. Job 1: 21. Prov. 16: 33.)

5. Of necessary events, the necessity of which depends, either upon the counsel of God, revealed through his word, we may adduce the following testimony: "These things were done that the Scriptures should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken." "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead on the third day." "It must needs be that offences will come." "If it were possible they would deceive the very elect." "My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hands." (John 19: 36. Luke 24: 36. Matt. 24: 24. John 10: 28.) Or if the necessity of these events depend on the order divinely established in nature, or on natural causes, operating by a natural necessity, we may in this case, adduce the following testimonies: "He causeth the bud to spring forth. He bringeth the dew, the frost and the ice. He bringeth forth Mazzaroth in his season; guides Arcturus and the motions of heaven," &c. "God thundereth marvellously with his voice; he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength. Out of the south cometh the whirlwind, and cold out of the north." "He watereth the hills from his chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man," &c. (Job 28: 27, 32; 37: 5–10; Ps. 104: 13, 14, 15.)

The Scriptures furnish almost an infinite number of testimonies of a similar character, which prove that the providence of God embraces all things and every single event. These, however, are sufficient for our present purpose; for it is clearly evident from what has now been said, that all things, the evil as well as the good, the small as well as the great, are directed and governed by the providence of God; yet in such a way that those things which are good are done not only according to, but also by divine providence, as the cause, that is by God willing, commanding and effecting them; whilst those that are evil, as far as they are evil, are not done by, but according to divine providence, that is, not by God willing, commanding, effecting or furthering them; but by permitting them, and directing them to their appointed ends.

The arguments by which we demonstrate that the providence of God embraces all and every single thing, are very nearly the same as those by which we prove that there is a providence.

1. Nothing can be done without the will of him who is all-powerful.

Therefore it is impossible that any thing can be done when God does not simply will it, seeing he is all-powerful. But whatever is done must be done either by God simply willing it, or it must be according to his will.

2. It belongs to a wise governor not to permit any thing, which he has in his power, to be done without his will and counsel; and the wiser he is, the more extensive will his government be. But the wisdom of God is infinite, and all things are in his power, according to Is. 40 : 27. Therefore nothing is done in the whole world which God does not will and decree.

3. All things have certain ends, which are truly good. But all good things are from God, who wills and directs them. Therefore he wills and directs the ends of things. But he who wills the ends, wills also the means for the attainment of these ends. Hence God wills the means, and these simply if they are good, or in a certain manner or respect if they are evil. Seeing therefore that all things which are and are done, are either ends or means for the attainment of these ends, it follows that God, must will and govern all things.

4. There is some first cause which does not depend on any thing else; but which is the ground of all other things. God is this first cause. Therefore all second causes depend upon the will of God.

5. God fore-knew all things unchangeably from everlasting, because he can neither be deceived nor err in his foreknowledge. Therefore the fore-knowledge of God is a certain and infallible knowledge of all things, so that all things come to pass just as God fore-knew they would, and that because he fore-knew them; for his fore-knowledge does not depend upon things created, but upon himself. Hence all events depend upon, and proceed immutably from the fore-knowledge of God.

6. All good things are from God as the first cause. All things made and established in nature, as substance, desires, actions, &c., as far as they are merely such, are good. Therefore they are from God, and are accomplished by his providence.

A refutation of certain objections against the Providence of God.

The first objection respects the confusion, or disorders in nature.

Those things which are in a state of confusion are not governed by God, because he is not the author of confusion. There is much confusion in the world. Therefore either nothing, or at least all things are not governed by divine providence. Ans. 1. Whilst there are many things in a state of confusion, there are nevertheless, many things that are wisely ordered and regulated, as the motions of the heavenly bodies, the preservation of the different races of men, and of the different species of animals, the preservation of commonwealths, the punishment of the wicked, &c. Hence it cannot be concluded universally, that nothing is governed by God. 2. As it respects those things which are deranged or confused, it merely follows that this confusion which attaches itself to these things by the malice of devils and men, is not from God. There is, therefore, here also more in the conclusion than in the premises. 3. We reply to the major proposition, that those things which are deranged are not governed by God in as far as this derangement itself is concerned; yet they are governed by him in as far

as there is any order discerned in the midst of this derangement. And there is nothing which is, or which occurs, in the world that is so deranged as to leave no marks of the order of divine wisdom, power and justice; for in the midst of the greatest confusion this order may always be clearly discerned. There was, for instance, great confusion as far as the wills and actions of men were concerned, in the death of the Son of God, who was crucified by the Jews; the same thing may be said of the selling of Joseph in Egypt, of the sedition of Absalom, &c., but yet there was at the same time the greatest order, as far as the will and counsel of God was concerned, who delivered his Son to death for our sins, sent Joseph into Egypt, punished David and Absalom, &c. In this way there can be in the same event confusion and order, only in a different respect. It follows therefore, that things confused are not from God, neither are they governed by him in as far as they are deranged and sinful; but in as far as they agree with the order of divine wisdom and justice they both are, and are governed by God.

To this it is objected: That which opposes the will of God is not ruled by God. The will of devils and men is opposed to the will of God. Therefore it is not ruled by God. Ans. There are here four terms in this syllogism; for the major is true of both the secret and revealed will of God, whilst the minor is true of the will of God only as revealed and made known.

The second objection against the providence of God is in reference to the cause of sin.

All actions and desires or motions are from God. Many actions are sinful. Therefore sin is from God, and as a matter of consequence the doctrine of a universal providence makes God the author of sin. Ans. There is a fallacy of the accident in the minor proportion; for the actions of the wicked are sins, not (*per se*) in themselves, in as far as they are actions; but by an accident on account of the want of righteousness, and of the perversity of the will of the ungodly, who do not observe this so as to follow in the action the will of God. For this want of righteousness, and perversity is an accident of the will and action of the creature, which God designs to be effected by the corrupt will.

Obj. 1. But many actions are in their own nature sins. Therefore they are also sins in themselves. Ans. We grant the whole argument as it respects actions prohibited by God, and committed by creatures contrary to the will of God; in so far they are sinful; but not in as far as God wills them, or commands them to be done. For in respect to the divine will exciting or producing them, they are always most just judgment of God; nor are they without manifest contempt of God under the name of sin, so that they may be comprehended under their class. Hence the antecedent is false.

Obj. 2. He who wills an action which is sinful in itself, wills also the sin. God wills actions which are sinful in themselves, as the selling of Joseph in Egypt, the sedition of Absalom, the lying of false prophets, the cruelty of the Assyrians, the crucifixion of Christ, &c. Therefore he wills sin. Ans. The major is true of him who wills an action which is sinful in respect to his will, or who wills an action with the same end with which he does who sins; but not of him who wills and performs a work which is sinful in respect to the will of another, or who wills a certain thing with a different end, and that good, seeing that it is in harmony with the nature and law of God. But the actions of the Assyrians and those of other sinners which God

efficaciously willed, are sins, not in respect to the will of God, but in respect to the will of man sinning; for God willed all those things with the best end, while men, on the other hand, willed them with the worst. That this answer may be the better understood, and be made to rebut with greater force these cavils, this general rule is to be observed, the truth of which is manifest as well in theology as in moral and natural philosophy: *When there are many causes of one and the same effect, some good and others evil, that effect in respect to the good causes, is good, whilst in respect to the evil it is evil and sinful; and good causes are in themselves the causes of good, but by an accident they become the causes of effects which are evil and sinful, or of the sin which is in the effect on account of a certain sinful cause; and on the contrary, sinful causes are in themselves the causes of evil, but by an accident they become they cause of the good, which is in the effect.* It is universally true that efficient and final causes make a difference in actions. It is for this reason that the same action, as for instance, the selling of Joseph into Egypt was a most wicked affair in respect to his brothers, and at the same time good in respect to God on account of different, efficient and final causes. And just as the good work of God cannot be referred to the brothers of Joseph, so their wicked deed cannot be ascribed to God.

Obj. 3. That which cannot be done, God absolutely forbidding it, may nevertheless be done when God wills it. Sin, in as far as it is sin, cannot be committed when God does not expressly will it, for the reason that he is omnipotent. Therefore sin must be committed by God willing it. Ans. We deny the consequence, because the major proposition is defective; it does not contain all that should be enumerated. This is wanting, or *when he permits it*: for sin may be committed when God does not simply will it, but willingly permits it. Or we may say there is an ambiguity in the phrase *not willing it*, which sometimes means to disapprove of, and prevent at the same time, in which sense it is impossible that any thing should be done when God does not will it, otherwise he would not be omnipotent; and then again it signifies only to disapprove of, and not to prevent, but to permit. In this sense sins may be committed when God does not will them, that is, when he does not approve of them; but yet does not so restrain the wicked as to prevent their commission.

Obj. 4. The want of righteousness in man is from God. This want of righteousness is sin. Therefore sin is from God. Ans. There are four terms in this syllogism, for in the major proposition, the want of righteousness signifies the desertion and withdrawal of grace actively, which is a most just punishment of the creature sinning, and is thus from God; whilst in the minor it is to be understood passively, signifying a want of that righteousness which we ought to possess, which, when it is willingly contracted and received by men, and exists in them contrary to the law of God, is sin which is neither wrought nor desired by God. *Briefly:* This want of righteousness is from God in as far as it is a punishment; and it is not from him in as far as it is sin, or opposition to the law in the creature.

Obj. 5. Sinners are governed by God. The actions of sinners are sins. Therefore sins are from God. Ans. There is more in the conclusion than in the premises: for this is all that follows legitimately: Therefore sins are ruled by God, which is true in as far as they are merely desires and actions, and are directed to the glory of God. There is also a fallacy

of accident in the minor; for actions are sins in as far as they are done by bad men contrary to the law, and not in as far as God influences men to perform them. They are, and become evil, therefore, not from themselves, but from an accident, which is the corruption of him who performs them, just as pure water becomes muddy and filthy by flowing through an impure channel, or as the best wine coming out of a good vessel, becomes sour by being put into an impure vessel, according to what Horace says, "*Unless the vessel be clean, that which thou puttest therein, soureth;*" or as the riding of a good horseman is halting if the horse be lame. In all these and similar examples, those things which are good in themselves are corrupted by an accident, so that we have the commission of what is called a fallacy of the accident, in as much as it proceeds from the thing itself to that which concurs with it by an accident in this manner: The governing of a lame horse is plainly a halting. The horseman wills and effects the governing of the lame horse. Therefore he wills and works the halting. Or the selling of Joseph by his brothers was a sin. God willed this selling. Therefore he willed the sin.

Obj. 6. God is the author of those things which are done by divine providence. All evils result from divine providence. Therefore God is the author of them. Ans. We grant the whole argument as it respects the evil of punishment; but as touching the evil of guilt the major must be distinguished in the following manner: Those things which are done by the providence of God effecting them, or in such a way that they result from it as an efficient cause, God is the author of them; but not of those which result from the providence of God only by permission, or which God permits, determines and directs to the best ends, as is true of the evil of guilt or crime. For the evils of guilt or sins in as far as they are such, have not the nature or consideration of good, as may be said to be true of the evil of punishment. Hence God does not will those things which are sins, neither does he approve of them, nor produce them, nor further or desire them, but merely permits them to be done, or does not prevent their commission, partly that he may exercise his justice in those who deserve to be punished, and partly that he may exhibit his mercy in forgiving others. "The scripture hath concluded all under sin that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to them that believe." "Even for this purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show forth my power in thee." (Gal. 3: 22. Rom. 9: 17.) It is for this reason declared in the definition of the doctrine of divine providence, that God permits evil to be done. But this permission as we have already shown, includes the withdrawal of divine grace by which God, 1. Does not make known to man his will, that he might act according thereto. 2. He does not incline the will of man to obey and honor him, and to act in accordance with his will as revealed. "If a dreamer of dreams shall arise among you, thou shalt not hearken unto him, for the Lord your God proveth you." "The Lord moved David against Israel to say, Go and number Israel and Judah. (Deut. 13: 1, 3. 2 Sam. 24: 1.) Why did he afterwards punish David? That he might be led to repentence. 3. He nevertheless influences and controls those who are thus deserted, so as to accomplish through them his just judgments; for God accomplishes good things through evil instruments, no less than through those which are good. For as the work of God is not made better by the excellency of the instrument, so neither is it made worse by the

evil character of the instrument. God wills actions that are evil, but only in as far as they are punishments of the wicked. All good things are from God. All punishments are just and good. Therefore they are from God, according as it is said: "Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it." (Amos 3: 6.) This is to be understood of the evil of punishment. The apostle James says in reference to the evil of guilt, "Let no man when he is tempted (that is when he is enticed to evil) say that he is tempted of God." (James 1: 13.) Only the evil of punishment, therefore, is from God, such as the chastisements and martyrdom of the saints, which he himself wills and effects. "Now therefore be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve your life." (Gen. 45: 5.) But God did not will death. Ans. He did not will it in as far as it is a torment and destruction of the creature, but he willed in as far as it is a punishment of sin, and the execution of his judgment. "Notwithstanding they hearkened not to the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them." (2 Sam. 2: 25.

The third objection is in respect to contradictory wills.

He who, in his secret counsel, wills and prohibits by his law the same work, in him there are contradictory wills. But in God there are no contradictory wills. Therefore he does not, by his secret determination, will those things which he prohibits in his law, as robbery, murder, lust, theft, &c. Ans. 1. We grant the whole argument in as far as these things are done by creatures contrary to the law, and are sins. In this sense God neither wills nor approves of them, but only in as far as they are certain motions and punishments of the wicked. 2. We must make a distinction in reference to the major proposition; for it is contradictory to say he wills and forbids the same work in the same respect, and with the same end. God wills and forbids the same things, but in a different respect, and with a different end. He willed, for instance, the selling of Joseph in as far as it was the occasion of his elevation, the preservation of the family of Jacob and the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the bondage of the seed of Abraham in Egypt. But in as far as he was sent away by the hatred of his brethren, he did not will it, but denounced and condemned it as horrible fratricide. And so of the other examples we have adduced.

The fourth objection relates to liberty and contingency.

That which is done by the immutable decree of God cannot be done contingently and freely, but necessarily. But many things are done contingently and freely. Therefore many things are not done by the immutable decree and providence of God, or else liberty and contingency are taken away. Ans. 1. We reply to the major: that which is done by the unchangeable decree of God cannot be done contingently, viz: in respect to the first cause, or in respect to the same immutable divine decree: yet it may be done contingently in respect to a second and last cause working contingently or freely. For contingency is the order between a changeable cause and its effect: just as necessity is the order between a necessary cause and its effect. Hence the cause must be of the same character as the effect. But the same effect may proceed from a changeable and necessary cause in different respects, as is the case with all things which God does through his creatures; of which both God and his creatues are the

cause. Thus in respect to God there is an unchangeable order between cause and effect; but in respect to creatures, there is a changeable order between the cause and the same effect. Hence in regard to God it is necessary, but in regard to the creature it is contingent in the same effect. Therefore it is not absurd that the same effect should be said to be necessary and contingent in respect to different causes, that is, in respect to an unchangeable first cause acting necessarily, and in respect to a changeable second cause acting contingently. 2. We also deny what is said in the major, that that is not done, or may be done freely which is done by the immutable decree of God. For it is not immutability, but constraint; or it is not the necessity of unchangeableness, but that of constraint which take away liberty. God is unchangeably and necessarily good, and yet he is at the same time most freely good: the devils are unchangeably and necessarily evil; and yet they are evil, and do that which is evil with the greatest freedom of the will.

The fifth objection relates to the uselessness of means.

It is in vain that means are employed for the purpose of hindering or advancing those things which are done by the unchangeable will and providence of God; such are the counsels, commands, doctrines, exhortations, promises and threatenings of God; the labors, endeavors, prayers, &c., of the saints. But these means are not employed in vain, because they are commanded by God. Therefore all things are not done by the unchangeable counsel and providence of God. Ans. 1. We deny the major, because the first and principal cause being considered, it is not necessary that that which is secondary and instrumental should be taken away; nor the contrary. The reason is because God decreed also to employ means and second causes for the purpose of accomplishing the ends and effects determined upon by himself, and he shows us in his word, and in the order of nature that he wills to use them, and commands us to do the same. Therefore, it is not in vain that the sun daily rises and sets; nor is it in vain that fields are sown, or watered with showers, or that our bodies are refreshed with food, although God creates light and darkness, causes the corn to spring up from the earth, and is the life and length of our days. So also, it is not in vain that men are taught, and that they should study to conform their lives to certain habits or doctrines, although the actions and events that promote our well-being proceed from God only. *Therefore means are to be employed;* 1. That we may render obedience to God, who has ordained both the ends and the means for the attainment of these ends, and has prescribed them unto us; otherwise we tempt God at our peril. 2. That we may obtain the good things promised unto us. 3. That we may retain a good conscience, even though we do not always obtain the things desired and expected in the use of these means.

2. It is also a fallacy to declare that to be true generally, which is true only in a certain respect; for even where there is nothing accomplished by means, they are nevertheless profitable in this respect, that they render the wicked inexcusable.

The sixth objection has respect to rewards and punishments.

Those things which are necessary do not merit rewards or punishments. All good works merit rewards, whilst evil works merit punishment. Therefore good and evil works do not occur necessarily, but changeably. Ans.

1. We grant the whole in relation to second causes, from which many things proceed changeably, and which therefore produce changeable effects. 2. We deny what is affirmed in the minor, that good works merit rewards with God, although they may be rewarded among men, as it is said of Abraham, "If he were justified by works he hath whereof to glory, but not before God." (Rom. 4 : 2.) 3. We deny the major proposition if it be understood of evil works generally; for that evil works merit punishment, the depravity and corrupt will of man is a sufficient testimony, whether they be necessarily done or not. Aristotle himself, when treating this subject in his Ethics, affirms that the inebriate ought not to be excused if he sin from intoxication, and that men are deservedly punished and reprehended for vices, whether of the body or of the mind, of which they themselves are the cause, although they may not be able to avoid or leave them off because they have brought these things upon themselves, of their own accord.

Question 22. What advantage is it to us to know that God has created, and by his providence doth still uphold all things?

Answer. That we may be patient in adversity; thankful in prosperity; and that in all things which may hereafter befal us, we place our firm trust in our faithful God and Father, that nothing shall separate us from his love; since all creatures are so in his hand, that without his will they cannot so much as move.

EXPOSITION.

It is necessary that the doctrine of the creation of all things, and of the providence of God should be known, and held:

1. *On account of the glory of God:* for those that deny the creation and providence of God, deny also his attributes; and in doing this they neither magnify nor praise God, but deny him. Therefore the doctrine of providence should be known that we may attribute unto God the glory of the power, wisdom, goodness and justice which appears in creating, preserving and governing all things.

2. *On account of our consolation and salvation*, that we may by this means be led, in the first place, to exercise patience in adversity; for whatever comes to pass by the will and counsel of God, and is profitable for us, that we ought patiently to bear. But all things, even those that are evil, happen by the counsel and will of God, and are profitable unto us. Therefore we ought to bear these patiently, and in all things consider and recognize the fatherly will of God towards us. *Secondly*, that in prosperity we may be thankful to God for the benefits received: for from whom we receive all good things, temporal as well as spiritual, great as well as small, to him we ought to be grateful. Now it is from God, the author of all good gifts, that we have all that we enjoy. Therefore we ought to be thankful to him, that is, we ought to acknowledge and celebrate his benefits. For gratitude bases itself upon the will and justice of God; and so consists in acknowledging and celebrating his benefits towards us, and in making suitable returns for the same. *Thirdly*, that we may entertain a good hope in regard to all things which may hereafter befal us. so as to rest fully assured that

if God by his providence has so far delivered us out of past evils, he will also in future make all things subservient to our salvation, and never so desert us that we perish. In short, the ends of the doctrine of divine providence are: the glory of God — patience in adversity — thankfulness in prosperity, and hope in regard to future things.

From these things it appears that the whole truth of religion, and the very foundation of piety would be overthrown if the providence of God, as it has been defined and explained, be not maintained: Because, 1. We would not be patient in adversity if we did not know that these things are sent upon us from God our Father. 2. We would not be grateful for the benefits which we receive if we did not know that they are given to us from above. 3. We would not have a good and certain hope in relation to future things if we were not fully persuaded that the will of God, in regard to our salvation, and that of all his people, is unchangeable.

ELEVENTH LORD'S DAY.

OF GOD THE SON.

Question 29. Why is the Son of God called Jesus, that is, a Saviour?

Answer. Because he saveth us, and delivereth us from our sins; and likewise because we ought not to seek, neither can find salvation in any other.

EXPOSITION.

The second part of the Creed, which now follows, treats of the mediator. The doctrine of the mediator consists of two parts: the one has respect to the person of the mediator; the other to his office. These two articles are concerning his person; *and in Jesus Christ his only begotten son, our Lord, who was conceived by the the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.* The four following articles which bring us down to the article of the Holy Ghost, treat of the office of the mediator. The office of the mediator consists of two parts: his humiliation or merit; and his glorification or efficacy. Now as it respects his humiliation, Christ is meritorious; as it respects his glorification, he is efficacious. The fourth article treats of his humiliation: *Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell.* The fifth and sixth treat of his glorification: *The third day he arose from the dead; ascended into heaven; sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.* The seventh which refers to his coming to judge the world, respects the consummation of his glory, when God will be all in all.

It appears from what has now been said with what great wisdom the articles of the Creed were written, and how well they are arranged in reference to the question of the mediator. The humiliation which is the first part of his office, has these grades: *he suffered, was crucified, dead, buried, and descended into hell.* We descend gradually from one degree to another until we reach the lowest point of his humiliation, which is found in the

article of his descent into hell. The other part of his office, which is his glorification, ascends gradually from the glory which is less to that which is greater until it reaches its highest point, in his exaltation at the right hand of God. The same order and wisdom appear in the first part of the Creed, and also in the third where we have enumerated in the most beautiful order and succession, the benefits which Christ purchased and applies unto us by the Holy Spirit, and which is, as it were, the fruit of the preceding articles. The office of Christ differs from his benefits as cause and effect, or as antecedent and consequent. The benefits are the things themselves which Christ has purchased for us, and which he bestows upon us, such as remission of sins, everlasting righteousness, and salvation. His office is the obtaining and bestowment of these things.

And in Jesus: that is, I believe in Jesus Christ. The words, *I believe*, are to be repeated, because as we believe in God, the Father, so we also believe in the Son of God, according to what is written: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." "I and my Father are one." "This is the word of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." "That all men should honor the Son as they honor the Father." (John 14: 1; 14: 11; 10: 30; 6: 29; 3: 36; 5: 23.) This is a sure and well-grounded argument in support of the true Divinity of the Son; for faith under this form is worship due to God alone.

Touching the name *Jesus*, which we are here to consider, we must not merely enquire into the etymology of it, what it imports, but we must consider more especially the office of the mediator, which is signified therein. The word *Jesus* (in Greek ιησοῦς, and in Hebrew Jehoscuah or Jeschuah) signifies a saviour, or the author of salvation, which God himself ascribes to the mediator in the new Testament. The true etymology or import of the word was given by the angel when he said, "his name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1: 21.) The Son of God is, therefore, called Jesus, the Saviour in respect to his office, because he is our mediator, and saves and delivers us from the evil both of guilt and punishment; and that truly, because he is an only and perfect Saviour. The salvation which he offers is righteousness and eternal life. This is inferred from the name itself, because he has not the name without the thing, but on account of the office.

Obj. But many others have also had the name of Jesus, as Joshua, the leader of the children of Israel, &c. Therefore nothing can be inferred and argued from the name itself. Ans. Others have had this name because they were typical saviours, foreshadowing the true saviour. And if it is objected that the parents of Joshua, when they gave this name to their infant son, could not have expected that future deliverance would have been brought to Israel through him, we reply that God knew it, and directed their wills in so naming the child. The difference, however, between other saviours and this Jesus is great. 1. Others had this name given them fortuitously by the will of men, but this Jesus was so called by the angel. 2. Others were typical; this Jesus is the appointed and true saviour. 3. God merely conferred temporal blessings upon his people through other deliverers; this Jesus frees us not only from bodily and temporal evils, but also from the evils both of guilt and punishment. 4. Other deliverers were only instruments and ministers through whom God bestowed these temporal bles-

sings; this Jesus is the author not only of all the good things which respect the body and this life, but also of those which respect the soul and the life to come.

The Son of God is, therefore, called Jesus by way of pre-eminence to indicate thereby that he is the true saviour. This is evident,

1. Because he saves us from the double evil of guilt and punishment. That he saves us from the evil of guilt is testified by the angel who said, "he shall save his people from their sins." That he frees us from the evil of punishment may be inferred from the fact, that if sin be taken away, punishment, which is the effect of sin, must also be taken away: for if the cause be removed the effect must also be removed. The people whom Jesus saves are all those that believe, and those only. He is the saviour only of such as believe, because it is only in them that his end is obtained. He established a church in the world to gather and save men; but upon this condition, that they apprehend the benefits which he offers, and are thankful to him for them.

2. Because he is an only saviour. For as our mediator is only one, so Jesus must also be our only Saviour, according to what is declared in many places of Scripture: "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." "God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." "I, even I am the Lord, and beside me there is no saviour." (Acts 4: 12. John 3: 18. 1 John 5: 11. 1 Tim. 2: 5. Is. 43: 11.)

Obj. The Father and the Holy Spirit also save us. Therefore the Son is not an only Saviour. Ans. It is true that all the persons of the Godhead are engaged in the work of our salvation, but there is a distinction as to the manner in which they save us. The Father saves us through the Son as the fountain of salvation. The Holy Spirit saves us as being the immediate agent or accomplisher of our regeneration. The Son saves us by his merit, as being the only Saviour, paying a ransom for us, giving the Holy Spirit, regenerating and raising us up unto eternal life. The efficacy of our salvation is therefore common to the three persons of the Godhead; but the manner is peculiar to the Son. Again, the Son is called the only Saviour in opposition to all creatures. He, therefore, excludes all creatures, but not the Father, or the Holy Spirit, as it is said, "No man knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God;" (1 Cor. 2: 11.) from which we are not to infer that the Father and the Son do not know themselves, for the Spirit is here compared with creatures, and not with the Father and the Son.

3. He is a saviour in two respects, by his merit and efficacy. He saves us by his merit or satisfaction, because by his obedience, suffering, death and intercession, he has merited for us remission of sins, reconciliation with God, the Holy Spirit, salvation and eternal life. "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world," that is, for the sins of all sorts of men, of whatever age, rank, or place they may be. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are

past." "Through the obedience of one, many were made righteous." "The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all." (1 John 2: 2; 1: 7. Rom. 3: 25; 5: 19. Is. 53: 5.) He also saves us by his efficacy, because he has not only, by his merits, obtained for us remission of sins, righteousness and that life which we had lost, but he also grants and applies unto us the whole benefit of redemption by virtue of his Spirit through faith. For what he has merited by his death he does not retain to himself alone; but confers upon us. He did not purchase salvation and eternal life (which he had) for himself, but for us, as our mediator. Therefore he reveals unto us the will of the Father, institutes and preserves the ministry, through this he gives the Holy Spirit and converts men, collects a church, bestows all good things necessary for this life, defends his church against all her enemies, finally raises up in the last day to eternal life, all those that believe in him, and delivers them from all evils, whilst he casts all his and their enemies into everlasting punishment. To accomplish all these things is the work of the true God, who alone is almighty. *In short*, his efficacy regenerates us by his word and Spirit in this life, and preserves those that are renewed, lest they fall again, and at length raises them unto eternal life. These passages of scripture speak of this revelation and regeneration. "No man knoweth who the Son is but the Father, and who the Father is but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "There is another that shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." "I will send the Holy Spirit unto you from the Father." "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men — some pastors, and teachers, &c. He ascended above all heavens that he might fill all things." "The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the Devil." (Matt. 11: 27. John 1: 18. Matt. 3: 11. John 15: 26. Eph. 4: 8, 10, 11. 1 John 3: 8.) Concerning the preservation of them that believe, the following passages may be cited: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me," &c. "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." "I will not leave you comfortless." "I and the Father will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14: 1; 18: 23. Matt. 18: 20.) Of his raising us up unto eternal life, these passages of Scripture speak: "I will raise him up at the last day." "No one shall pluck my sheep out of my hand." "And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." When he shall have subjected all things unto himself, he shall present before God a glorious church, which he has gathered from the beginning to the end of the world. (John 6: 54; 10: 28, 29. 1 Cor. 15: 28. Eph. 5: 27.) From what has now been said we may perceive that the gift of the Holy Spirit is also a part of our salvation, and that this ought to be accomplished through the mediator; for the Holy Spirit renovates the heart by abolishing sin, which being abolished, death must also, necessarily, be abolished. It was for this destruction, or abolishing of sin and death, that Christ came into the world.

4. He saves us fully, and perfectly, by commencing salvation in us in this life, and at length consummating it in the life to come. This he does, because his merit is most perfect, and that for two reasons, as has already been explained: First, because he is God. "God purchased the church with his own blood; (Acts 20: 28.) from which it appears that his satisfaction

surpasses the punishment and satisfaction of all the angels; and secondly because of the greatness of the punishment which he endured for us. He also saves us in the manner just specified, because the salvation which he confers upon us is most full, and complete: "Ye are complete in him;" (Col. 2: 10;) that is, ye have all things which pertain unto everlasting blessedness, and are made the complete and happy sons of God through and on account of Jesus Christ: "For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fullness dwell." "The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God cleanseth us from all sin." "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." "But this man, because he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." "Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." (Col. 1: 19. 1 John 1: 7. Rom. 8: 1. Heb. 7: 24.)

The sum of all that has been said concerning the name of Jesus, may be briefly reduced to these questions: 1. *Who is he that saves us?* The Son of God is our Jesus, or Saviour. 2. *Whom does he save?* His people, that is, all and only the elect given to him by the Father 3. *From what evils does he save us?* From all sins, and from the punishment of sin. 4. *In what manner does he save us?* In two ways; by his merit and efficacy, and in each way most perfectly.

Now, therefore, what is the meaning of this article, *I believe in Jesus?* It means, 1. I believe that there is a certain Saviour of the human race. 2. I believe that this person, Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, is this Saviour, of whom the Father declared from Heaven, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matt. 3: 17.) God therefore will have him to be worshipped and honored: "He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent him." (John 5: 23.) 3. I believe that this Jesus, by his merit and efficacy, delivers us from all evils, both of guilt and punishment, by commencing this salvation in us in this life, and consummating it in the life to come. 4. I believe that he is not only the Saviour of others, whom he has called into his service, but that he is also my only and perfect Saviour, working effectually in me here, and carrying on until the day of full redemption what he has commenced.

Question 30. Do such then believe in Jesus the only Saviour, who seek their salvation and happiness of saints, of themselves, or anywhere else?

Answer. They do not; for though they boast of him in words, yet in deeds they deny Jesus, the only deliverer and Saviour: for one of these two things must be true, that either Jesus is not a complete Saviour, or that they, who by a true faith receive this Saviour, must find all things in him necessary to their salvation.

EXPOSITION.

This question is proposed on account of those who glory in the name of Jesus, and yet, at the same time, seek their salvation, either wholly or in part in some other place without him, in the merits of the saints, in the indulgences of the Pope, in their own offerings, works, fastings, prayers, alms, &c., as do the Papists, the Jesuits, and other hypocrites of a similar

cast. We must therefore enquire, whether these persons believe in Jesus as the only Saviour, or not. It is answered, that they do not believe in him, but that in very deed they deny him, however much they may boast of him in words. The substance of this answer is included in this syllogism, drawn from the description of an only and perfect Saviour: Whosoever is a perfect, and only Saviour, he does not confer salvation with others, nor in part only. Jesus is a complete and only Saviour, as we have shown in the exposition of the former question. Therefore he does not confer salvation in connection with others, nor in part only; but he alone confers it entire, and in the most perfect manner. Hence we justly conclude that all those who seek their salvation wholly or in part somewhere else, in reality deny him to be an only and perfect Saviour. Or, we may put it in this form: Those who seek salvation elsewhere than in Christ, whether in the saints, or in themselves, &c., do not believe in Jesus as an only Saviour. The Papists and Jesuits, who look upon their works as meritorious, do this. Therefore they do not believe in Jesus as their only Saviour. The minor proposition is acknowledged by them; and as to the major, it is clearly evident from the description which we have given of a perfect Saviour.

Obj. God desires and commands us to pray for each other. Therefore to attribute a part of our salvation to the intercession of the saints, does not impeach the office and glory of an only Saviour. Ans. There is a great distinction to be made between the intercessions of Christ and those of the saints. Christ intercedes for us with the Father, by the efficacy of his own peculiar dignity and merit; and is heard on account of himself, and obtains what he asks. The saints pray and intercede mutually for each other in this life, and the good things which they ask and obtain for themselves, and others, they seek and obtain, not upon their own worthiness, but upon the ground of the dignity and merit of the mediator. Wherefore, inasmuch as the Papists imagine that the saints obtain favor with God, and certain good things for others on account of the worthiness of their own merits, they manifestly derogate from the office and glory of Jesus, and deny him to be an only Saviour.

TWELFTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 31. Why is he called Christ, that is, anointed?

Answer. Because he is ordained of God the Father, and anointed with the Holy Ghost, to be our chief Prophet and teacher; who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption, and to be our only High Priest, who, by the one sacrifice of his body, has redeemed us, and makes continual intercession with the Father for us; and also to be our Eternal King, who governs us by his word and Spirit, and who defends and preserves us in the enjoyment of that salvation he has purchased for us.

EXPOSITION.

Jesus is the proper name of the mediator; Christ is, as it were, an additional appellation; for he is Jesus in such a manner that he is also the

Christ, the promised Saviour and Messiah. Both titles designate his office, yet not with the same clearness; for whilst the name Jesus denotes the office of the mediator in a general way, that of Christ expresses it more fully and distinctly; for the name Christ expresses the three parts of his office, viz: prophetical, sacerdotal, and regal. The name Christ signifies the anointed. Therefore, he is Jesus the Saviour, in such a manner that he is Christ, or the anointed, having the office of one that is anointed, which consists of three parts, as has just been remarked. The reason why these three things are comprehended in the name of Christ, is, because prophets, priests and kings were anciently anointed, by which was signified both an ordination to the office, and also a conferring of those gifts which were necessary for the proper discharge of the duties thereby imposed. *Therefore, we thus conclude:* He who is to be a prophet, priest, and king, and is called the anointed, he is so called on account of these three offices. Christ was to be a prophet, priest and king, and is called the anointed. Therefore, he is called the anointed, or Christ, on account of these three, so that these parts of the office of the mediator are expressed in the one title of the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed. In discussing this question of the Catechism, we must enquire:

I. *What is meant by the anointing of Christ, seeing the Scriptures no where speak of his being anointed?*
II. *What is the prophetical office of Christ?*
III. *What is the priestly office of Christ?*
IV. *What is the regal office of Christ?*

I. What is the unction, or anointing of Christ?

Anointing was a ceremony by which prophets, priests and kings were confirmed in their office by being anointed either with common, or with a particular kind of oil. This anointing signified, 1. An ordination, or calling to the office for which they were thus set apart. 2. It signified the promise and bestowment of the gifts necessary for the purpose of sustaining those upon whom the burden of either of these offices was imposed. There was also an analogy between the sign, or the external anointing, and the thing signified thereby: because as oil strengthens, invigorates, renovates, and makes firm the dry and feeble members of the body, and renders them active and fit for the discharge of their office; so the Holy Spirit enlivens and renews our nature, unfit of itself for the accomplishment of any thing that is good, and furnishes it with strength and power to do that which is agreeable to God, and to discharge properly the duties imposed upon us in the relations in which we are called to serve him.

Moreover, those who were anointed under the Old Testament were types of Christ, so that it may be said that their anointing was only a shadow, and so imperfect. But the anointing of Christ was perfect. For "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2: 9.) He alone received all the gifts of the Spirit in the highest number and degree. Another point of difference is seen in this, that none of those who were anointed under the Old Testament received all the gifts — some received more, others less; but no one received all, neither did all receive them in the same degree. Christ, however, had all these gifts in the fullest and

highest sense. Therefore, although this anointing was proper to those of the Old Testament, as well as to Christ, yet it was real and perfect in no one excepting Christ.

Obj. But we no where read of the anointing of Christ in the holy Scriptures. Ans. It is true, indeed, that it is no where said that Christ was anointed ceremoniously; but he was anointed really and spiritually, that is, he received the thing signified thereby, which was the Holy Ghost. "Therefore God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me." (Ps. 45: 7. Heb. 1: 9. Is. 61: 1.) The anointing of Christ is, therefore, spoken of both in the Old and New Testament. It behooved Christ to be, not a typical prophet, priest and king, but that one which was signified and true, of whom all the others were but shadows. Hence it behooved him to be anointed, not typically, but really; for it was necessary that there should be an analogy between the office and the anointing, and, as a matter of consequence, it became necessary that his anointing should not be sacramental, but spiritual; not typical, but real.

Christ was, then, anointed, 1. Because he was ordained to the office of mediator by the will of his Heavenly Father. "I am not come of myself, but the Father hath sent me." "God hath spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things." (John 7: 28. Heb. 1: 1.) 2. Because his human nature was endowed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit without measure; so that he had all the gifts and graces necessary for restoring, ruling and preserving his church, and for administering the government of the whole world, and directing it to the glory of God, and the salvation of his people. "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." (John 3: 34.) These two parts of the anointing of Christ differ from each other in this manner, that the conferring of gifts has respect to the human nature only, whilst his ordination to the office of mediator has respect to both natures.

Hence, an answer is readily furnished to another objection which we sometimes hear: God cannot be anointed Christ is God. Therefore, he could be anointed. Ans. We grant the whole if understood of that nature in which Christ is God, that he cannot be anointed, 1. Because it is impossible for us to add anything of justice, wisdom and power to the Godhead. 2. Because the Holy Spirit, by whom the anointing was effected, is the proper Spirit of Christ, no less, than of the Father. Therefore, just as no one can give thee thy spirit which is in thee, because what thou hast cannot be given to thee; so no one can give the Holy Spirit to God, because he is in him, from him, is his proper Spirit, and is given to others by him.

Obj. But if Christ could not be anointed as to his Divinity, he is then prophet, priest, king and mediator, according to his humanity only; for he is mediator according to that nature only which could be anointed. But it was possible for him to be anointed only as to his humanity. Therefore, he is mediator according to his humanity alone. The minor proposition is proven by the definition of anointing, which is to receive gifts. But he received gifts only as to his human nature. Therefore, it was in respect to this alone that he was anointed. Ans. We deny what is here affirmed, because the definition which is given of anointing is not sufficiently dis-

tinct nor full; for anointing does not merely include the reception of the gifts which pertain only to the humanity of Christ, but also an ordination to the office of mediator which has respect to both natures. Therefore, although the humanity of Christ alone could receive the Holy Spirit, yet it does not follow that his Divinity was excluded from this anointing, in as far as it was a designation to the office of mediator. Or we may present the argument clearer by considering it negatively: Christ is not mediator according to the nature in which he is not anointed. He is not anointed as to his Divinity. Therefore he is not mediator in respect to his Godhead. Ans. There are here four terms. In the major, the anointing is taken for both parts thereof, or for the whole anointing — for the designation to the office, and the bestowment of gifts. In the minor, it is considered only in relation to one part of the anointing. Therefore, it follows that Christ was anointed according to each nature, although in a different manner, as has been shown. Hence, Christ is prophet, priest, king and mediator, in respect to each nature, which is confirmed in the word of God by these two fundamental rules:

1. The properties of the one nature of the mediator, are attributed to the whole person in the concrete, according to the communication of properties; but in respect to that nature only to which they are peculiar, as God is angry, suffered, died, viz., according to his humanity. The man Christ is omnipotent, eternal, everywhere, viz., according to his Divinity.

2. The names, also, of the office of mediator, are attributed to the whole person in respect to both natures, yet preserving the properties of each nature, and the differences in the works peculiar to each; because, both the divine and human nature, together with the operations thereof, are necessary to the discharge of the office of mediator. So that each may perform that which is proper to it, in connection with the other.

Irenaeus says, in relation to this subject, that this anointing is to be understood as comprehending the three persons of the Godhead: the Father, as the anointer, the Son, as the anointed, and the Holy Spirit, as the unction, or the anointing.

II. What is the prophetical office of Christ?

Having considered what we are to understand by the anointing of Christ, we must now speak briefly of the three-fold office, or of the three parts of the office of the mediator unto which Christ was anointed. And in order that we may have a proper understanding of this subject, we must define what the terms prophet, priest, and king signify, which may be gathered from the parts of the office which these persons severally discharged.

The word *prophet* comes from the Greek προφημι, which means to publish things that are to come. In general, a prophet is a person called of God, to declare and explain his will to men concerning things present or future, which otherwise would have remained unknown, inasmuch as the truths which he reveals are of such a nature that men, of themselves, could never have attained a knowledge of them. A prophet is either a minister, or the head and chief of the prophets, which is Christ. Of those prophets which were ministerial, some were of the Old and some of the New Testament. Among the latter there were some that were generally, and others specially, so called.

The prophets of the Old Testament were persons immediately called, and sent of God to his people, that they might reprove their errors and sins, by threatening punishment upon offenders, and inviting men to repentance; that they might declare and expound the true doctrine and worship of God, and preserve it from falsehood and corruption; that they might make known and illustrate the promise of the Messiah — the benefits of his kingdom, and might fore-tell events that were to come, having the gift of miracles, and other sure and divine testimonies so that they could not err in the doctrine which they declared; and at the same time sustaining certain relations to the state, and performing duties of a civil character.

A prophet of the New Testament specially so called, was a person immediately called of God, and furnished with the gift of prophecy for the purpose of fore-seeing, and fore-telling things to come; such were Paul, Peter, Agabus, &c. Whoever has the gift of understanding, explaining, and applying the holy Scriptures to the edification of the church, and individuals, is a prophet, generally, so called. It is in this sense the term is used in 1 Cor. 14: 3, 4, 5, 29.

Christ is the greatest and chief prophet, and was immediately ordained of God, and sent by him from the very commencement of the church in Paradise, for the purpose of revealing the will of God to the human race; instituting the ministry of the word and the sacraments, and at length manifesting himself in the flesh, and proving by his divine teaching and works that he is the eternal and con-substantial Son of the Father, the author of the doctrine of the gospel, giving through it the Holy Spirit, kindling faith in the hearts of men, sending apostles, and collecting to himself a church from the human family in which he may be obeyed, invoked and worshipped.

The prophetical office of Christ is, therefore, 1. To reveal God and his whole will to angels and men, which could only be made known through the Son, and by a special revelation. "He who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "I speak to the world those things which I have heard of my Father. (John 1: 18; 8: 26.) It was also the office of Christ to proclaim the law, and to keep it free from the errors and corruptions of men. 2. To institute and preserve the ministry of the gospel; to raise up and send forth prophets, apostles, teachers, and other ministers of the church; to confer on them the gift of prophecy, and furnish them with the gifts necessary to their calling. "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists," &c. "Therefore said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets, and apostles," &c. "For I will give you a mouth, and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay, nor resist." "The Spirit of Christ spoke through the prophets." (Ep. 4: 11. Luke 11: 49; 21: 15. 1 Pet. 1: 11.) 3. It pertains to the prophetical office of Christ that he should be efficacious through his ministry, in the hearts of those that hear, to teach them internally by his Spirit, to illuminate their minds, and move their hearts to faith and obedience by the gospel. "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." "Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the scriptures." "Christ gave himself for the church that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming

the word with signs following." "The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended unto the things spoken by Paul." "The Lord gave testimony unto the word of his grace." (Matt. 3: 11. Luke 24: 45. Ep. 5: 26. Mark 16: 20. Acts 16: 14; 14: 3.) To sum up the whole in a few words, the prophetical office of Christ consists of three parts: To reveal the will of the Father; to institute a ministry, and to teach internally, or effectually through the ministry. These three things Christ has performed from the very commencement of the church, and will perform even to the end of the world, and that by his authority, power and efficacy. Hence, Christ is called the *Word*, not only in respect to the Father, by whom he was begotten when beholding himself in contemplation, and considering the image of himself, not vanishing away, but subsisting, con-substantial, and co-eternal with the Father himself; but also in respect to us, because he is the person that spake to the fathers, and brought forth the living word, or gospel from the bosom of the Father.

Hence it is apparent from what has now been said, what is the difference between Christ and other prophets, and why he is called the greatest teacher, and prophet, and so the chief of all prophets. 1. Christ is the Son of God, and Lord of all; the other prophets were only men, and servants of Christ. 2. Christ brought forth and uttered the word immediately from the Father to men; other prophets and apostles are called and sent by Christ. 3. The prophetical wisdom of Christ is infinite; for even according to his humanity, he excelled all others in every gift. 4. Christ is the fountain of all truth, and the author of the ministry: other prophets merely proclaim and reveal what they receive from Christ. Hence Christ is said to have spoken through the prophets. Neither does he reveal his doctrine to the prophets alone, but to all the godly. Hence it is said, "of his fullness have we all received," &c. (John 1: 16.) 5. Christ preaches effectually through his own external ministry, and that of those whom he calls into his service, by virtue of the Holy Spirit operating upon the hearts of men: other prophets are the instruments which Christ employs, and are co-workers together with him. 6. The doctrine of Christ is clearer and more complete than that of Moses and all the other prophets. 7. Christ had authority of himself; others have their authority from Christ. We believe Christ when he speaks on account of himself, but we believe others because Christ speaks in them.

III. What is the priestly or sacerdotal office of Christ?

A priest in general is a person appointed of God, for the purpose of offering oblations and sacrifices, for interceding and teaching others. We may distinguish between those who serve in the capacity of priests, by speaking of them as typical and real. A typical priest is a person ordained of God to offer typical sacrifices, to make intercessions for himself and others, and to teach the people concerning the will of God, and the Messiah to come. Such were all the priests of the old Testament, among whom there was one that was the greatest, usually called the High Priest; the others were inferior. It was peculiar to the High Priest, 1. That he alone entered once every year into the sanctuary, or most holy place, and that with blood which he offered for himself, and the people, burning incense and making intercession. 2. He had a more splendid and gorgeous appa-

rel than the others. 3. He was placed over the rest. 4. He offered sacrifice, and made intercession for himself and the people. 5. He was to be consulted in matters or questions that were doubtful, weighty and obscure, and returned to the people the answer which God directed him to give. All the rest were inferior, whose office it was to offer sacrifices, to teach the doctrine of the law, and the promises pertaining to the Messiah, and to intercede for themselves and others. Wherefore, although all the priests of the old Testament were types of Christ, yet the typical character of the High Priest was the most notable of them all, because in him there were many things that represented Christ, the true and great High Priest of the Church.

Obj. But if prophets and priest both teach, they do not differ from each other. Ans. They did indeed both teach the people, yet they were variously distinguished. Prophets were raised up immediately by God, from any tribe, whilst the priests were mediately ordained from the single tribe of Levi. Prophets taught extraordinarily, whilst the priests had the ordinary ministry. The prophets received their doctrine immediately from God, whilst the priests learned it out of the law. The prophets had divine testimonies so that they could not err; the priests could err in doctrine, and often did err in their instructions, and were reproved by the prophets.

The signified and true priest is Christ, the Son of God, who was immediately ordained by the Father, and anointed by the Holy Ghost to this office, that, having assumed human nature, he might reveal the secret will and counsel of God to us, and offer himself a propiatory sacrifice for us, interceding in our behalf, and applying his sacrifice unto us, having the promise that he is always certainly heard in behalf of all those for whom he intercedes, and obtains for them the remission of sins; and finally through the ministers of the word and the Holy Spirit, collects, illuminates and sanctifies his church.

There are, therefore, four principal parts of the priestly office of Christ: 1. To teach men, and that in a different manner from all others, who are called to act as priests; for he does not merely speak to the ear by his word, but effectually inclines the heart by his Holy Spirit. 2. To offer himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world. 3. To make continual intercession and prayer for us to the Father, that he may receive us into his favor on account of his intercession and will, and on account of the perpetual efficacy of his sacrifice; and to have the promise of being heard in reference to those things which he asks. 4. To apply his sacrifice unto those for whom he intercedes, which is to receive into favor those that believe, and to bring it to pass that the Father may receive them, and that faith may be wrought in their hearts, by which the merits of Christ may be made over to them, so that they are regenerated by the Holy Spirit unto everlasting life.

From what has now been said we may easily perceive the difference between Christ and other priests. 1. The latter teach only with the external voice; Christ teaches also by the inward and efficacious working of the Holy Spirit. 2. Other priests do not make continual intercession, nor do they always obtain those things for which they pray. 3. They do not apply their own benefits to others. 4. They do not offer themselves a sacrifice for others; all of which things belong to Christ alone.

IV. What is the Kingdom or regal office of Christ?

A king is a person ordained of God, that he may rule over a certain people, according to just laws, that he may have power to reward the good and punish the evil, and that he may defend his subjects, not having any one superior or above him. The King of Kings is Christ, who was immediately ordained of God, that he might govern, by his word and Spirit, the church which he purchased with his own blood, and defend her against all her enemies, whom he will cast into everlasting punishment, whilst he will reward his people with eternal life.

The kingly office of Christ is therefore: 1. To rule the church by his word and Spirit, which he does in such a manner that he does not only show us what he would have accomplished in us, but also so inclines and affects the heart by his Spirit, that we are led to do the same. 2. He preserves and defends us against our enemies, both external and internal, which he does by protecting us by his almighty power, arming us against our foes, that we may by his Spirit, be furnished with every weapon necessary for resisting and overcoming them. 3. To bestow upon his church gifts and glory; and finally, to liberate her from all evils; to control and overcome all his enemies by his power, and at length, having fully subdued them, to cast them into inconceivable misery and wretchedness.

Question 32. But why art thou called a Christian?

Answer. Because I am a member of Christ by faith, and thus am partaker of his anointing, that so I may confess his name, and present myself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to him: and also, that with a free and good conscience I may fight against sin and Satan in this life, and afterwards reign with him eternally, over all creatures.

EXPOSITION.

In this question we are to consider the dignity and communion of Christians with Christ their head, together with the offices which they sustain as members of Christ. The name *Christian*, was first given to the disciples of Christ at Antioch, in the time of the Apostles. Prior to this they were called *Brethren* and *Disciples*. The name *Christian* is derived from Christ, and denotes one who is a disciple of Christ — one who follows his doctrine and life, and who, being engrafted into Christ, has communion with him. There are two kinds of Christians; some that are only apparently such, and others that are really and truly such. Those who are Christians merely in appearance, are those who have been baptized, and who are in the company of those who are called, and profess the Christian faith; but are without conversion, being nothing more than hypocrites and dissemblers, of whom it is said: "Many are called, but few are chosen." "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven," &c. (Matt. 20: 16; 7: 22.) Those are true christians who are not only baptized and profess the doctrine of Christ, but who are also possessed of a true faith, and declare this by the fruits of repentance; or, they are those who are members of Christ by a true faith, and are made partakers of his anointing. All true

Christians are such also in appearance, because it is said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good work, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "Show me thy faith by thy works." (Matt. 5: 16. James 2: 18.) But it is not true, on the other hand, that all who are apparently Christians are also such in reality; because it will be said of many, "I never knew you." (Matt. 7: 23.)

We are here to speak only of such as are true Christians; and we must enquire, Why are we called Christians, that is, anointed? The reasons of this are two: because we are members of Christ by faith, and are made partakers of his anointing; that is, we are called Christians, because we have communicated unto us the person, office and dignity of Christ.

To be a member of Christ is to be engrafted into him, and to be united to him by the same Holy Spirit dwelling in him and in us, and by this Spirit to be made a possessor of such righteousness and life as is in Christ; and to be made acceptable to God on account of the righteousness of Christ imputed unto us by faith, in as much as this righteousness is imperfect in this life. Of this our communion with Christ, the following passages of Scripture speak. "We being many are one body in Christ." "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ." "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit." "We may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." (Rom. 12: 5. 1 Cor. 6: 15; 12: 12. Eph. 4: 15.)

The relation which holds between the head and the members of the same body, is a most fit and striking illustration of the close and indissoluble union between Christ and us. For, first, just as the members of the body have one and the same head, by means of which they are joined together by sinews and fleshy ligaments, and from which life and motion are communicated through the whole body; and just as all the outward and inward senses are seated in the head, from which the whole body and every single member draws its proper life; and as from the head alone life is communicated to every member, and not from one member to another, so long as they remained joined with the head and with each other; so Christ is the living head from whom the Holy Spirit is made to pass over into every member, and not from one member to another; from whom all the members are made to draw their life, and by whom they are ruled as long as they remain united to him by the Spirit dwelling in him and us, and that through faith by which we become the members of Christ; for it is through faith that we receive the Spirit, through whom this union is effected. But the members are united with each other and among themselves by mutual love, which cannot be wanting if we are joined to the head; for the connection of the head with the body is the cause of the union which exist among the members themselves.

Secondly; just as in the human body there are various gifts, and as the members perform different offices, and yet but one life animates and moves them all, so in the church, which is but one body, there are various gifts and offices, and only one Spirit, by whose benefit and help each individual member performs his appropriate office.

Thirdly; just as the head is placed highest, and is, therefore, deserving of the greatest honor, and is the fountain of all life, so Christ has the highest place in the church, because in him the Spirit is without measure, and from his fullness we receive all the good gifts which we enjoy; but in

Christians who are the members of Christ there is only a certain measure of gifts, which is made over to them from Christ their only head. Wherefore it is plain that the Pope of Rome lies, when he declares himself to be the head of the church.

Christ is our head, in three respects: 1. *In respect to the perfection of his person*, because he is God and man, excelling all creatures in gifts, even as far as his human nature is concerned. "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him." (Col. 2: 9.) He alone gives the Holy Ghost, as it is said, "he it is that shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." (Matt. 3: 11.) 2. *In the dignity and order*, glory and majesty with which he declares himself to be king, Lord, and heir of all things. For, just as God created all things through him, so he has made him heir of all things, and the ruler of his house. 3. *In respect to his office.* He is the redeemer and sanctifier of the church — is present with every member thereof — rules, governs, quickens, nourishes and confirms them so that they remain united to him and the rest of the members, just as the head governs and animates the whole body.

We are also members of Christ, in three respects: 1. Because, by faith and the Holy Spirit we are joined to him, and, also, united among ourselves just as the members are connected with the head and with each other. The joining together of the members of Christ with each other and among themselves, is no less necessary for the safety of the church, than the conjunction of the whole body with Christ the head; for if you separate the hand from the arm, you thereby separate it also from the body, so that it can no longer have any life: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." (Ep. 3: 17.) 2. Because we are quickened and governed by Christ, and draw from him, as the fountain, all good things, so that unless we continue in him we have no life in us, as the members cut off from the body can retain no life in themselves. "If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered." (John 15: 6.) 3. Because as in the body there are different powers and functions belonging to the members, so there are different gifts and offices pertaining to the members of the church of Christ; and as all the actions of the different parts of the body contribute to its preservation, so all the members of Christ ought to refer whatever they do to the preservation and benefit of the church, which is the body of Christ. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." (Rom. 12: 4. 1 Cor. 12: 7.)

Having now explained what it is to be a member of Christ, and in what manner we are his members, it will be more clearly seen what it is to be a partaker of the anointing of Christ. *Anointing* signifies a communion of the gifts and office of Christ; or it is a participation in all the gifts of Christ, and consists in the participation of his kingly, sacerdotal and prophetical office. To be a partaker of the anointing of Christ, is, therefore, 1. To be a partaker of the Holy Ghost and of his gifts, for the Spirit of Christ is not idle or inactive in us, but works the same in us that he does in Christ, unless that Christ alone has more gifts than all of us, and these also in a greater or higher degree. 2. That Christ communicates his prophetical, sacerdotal and kingly office unto us.

The prophetical dignity which is in Christians, is an understanding, acknowledgement and confession of the true doctrine of God necessary for our salvation. Or, our prophetical office is, 1. Rightly to know God and his will. 2. That every one in his place and degree profess the same, being correctly understood, faithfully, boldly and constantly, that God may thereby be celebrated, and his truth revealed in its living force and power. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 10: 32.)

The office of a priest is to teach, to intercede, and to offer sacrifice. Our priesthood, therefore, is, 1. To teach others; that is, to show and communicate to them the knowledge of the true God. "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22: 32.) 2. To call upon God, having a correct knowledge of him. 3. To render proper gratitude, worship and obedience to God, or to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, pleasing, and acceptable unto God, being sanctified by the sacrifice of Christ, which includes, 1. That we offer ourselves by mortifying our old man, and giving our members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 2. Our prayers. "Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." (Heb. 13: 15.) 3. Our alms. "Thy prayers, and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." (Acts 10: 4.) 4. Confession of the gospel. "Ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the gentiles might be acceptable." (Rom. 15: 16.) 5. Cheerful and patient endurance of the cross, and all the various calamities which God sends upon us. "Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice, and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all." "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." (Phil. 2: 17. 2 Tim. 4: 6.)

Furthermore, Christ communicates his priestly office unto us, 1. By accomplishing and bringing it to pass that we offer the above named sacrifices of thanksgiving. 2. By causing them to be acceptable and pleasing to God.

The sacrifice of Christ, therefore, differs from ours in the same way in which it differs from the sacrifices of the priests of old. 1. Christ offered up a sacrifice of thanksgiving and propitiation, at the same time, we offer only sacrifices of thanksgiving. The priests of old also offered up sacrifices of thanksgiving, because these belong to the whole church, even from the beginning to the end of the world. The sacrifices, moreover, which they offered, were only typical, which is no longer the case, since all types and shadows have been done away with by Christ, who offered, not a typical sacrifice, but one that was real—the one which was signified by all the sacrifices of the Old Testament; and this he did, because he was not a typical priest, but the true and great High Priest of the church, to whom all the others looked. 2. The sacrifice of Christ was perfect; ours is imperfect, and defiled with many sins. 3. The sacrifice of Christ is meritorious in itself, and avails before God on account of itself; our sacrifices mean nothing, and are pleasing to God only for the sake of the sacrifice of Christ.

The kingly office of Christians, is, 1. To oppose and overcome, through faith, the devil, the world, and all enemies. 2. Having subdued all our enemies, to obtain at length through the same faith, eternal life and glory. "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you

from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25: 34.) We are, therefore, kings. 1. Because we are lords over all creatures in Christ; for, says the apostle, "all things are yours." (Cor. 3: 21.) 2. Because we conquer all our enemies through faith in Christ, "who giveth us the victory." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1. Cor. 15: 57. 1. John, 5: 4.)

The kingship of Christ, however, differs from that of Christians, in this. 1. The kingdom of Christ is hereditary, for he is the natural Son of God, whilst we are the sons of God by adoption. "But Christ as a Son over his own house." "God hath spoken unto us by Christ, whom he hath appointed heir of all things. (Heb. 3: 6; 1: 2.) 2. He alone is king over all creatures, and especially over the church; but we are kings and lords, not of angels and the church, but only of other creatures. Heaven, earth, and therefore all things shall serve us, for we shall be crowned with glory, majesty and the greatest excellency of gifts, so that we shall condemn devils and wicked men, by cheerfully submitting and yielding to the judgment of God in passing sentence of condemnation upon them. Hence we are kings, not over the church, but over all remaining creatures; but Christ rules with full right, not only over the whole church, but also over all creatures. "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world." (Matt. 19: 28. 1 Cor. 6: 2.) 3. Christ conquers his enemies by his own power, but we overcome our foes in and through him — by his grace and assistance. "Be of good comfort, I have overcome the world." (John 16: 33.) 4. Christ rules the world by the sceptre of his word and Spirit, swaying our hearts and restoring in us his image which was lost. This is peculiar to Christ alone; for we are unable to give the Holy Spirit, being nothing more than ministers and administrators of the outward word and rites, as John the Baptist said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, and shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man." (Matt. 3: 11. 1 Cor. 3: 5.)

The use and importance of this doctrine is great. 1. For consolation, because we are through faith engrafted into Christ as members to the head, that we may be continually sustained, governed and quickened by him; and because he makes us prophets, priests and kings unto God and his Father, by making us partakers of his anointing. This is truly an unspeakable dignity conferred upon christians. 2. For admonition and exhortation; for since we are all prophets and teachers of God, we ought continually to celebrate and praise him; since we are priests, we ought to offer ourselves wholly to God, as living sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving; and since we are kings it becomes us to fight manfully against sin, the world, and the devil, that we may reign with Christ.

THIRTEENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 33. Why is Christ called the only begotten Son of God, since we are also the children of God?

Answer. Because Christ alone is the eternal and natural Son of God; but we are children adopted of God, by grace, for his sake.

EXPOSITION.

The Deity of the Son of God is taught in this question, and it is now proper for us to consider it more fully. But here an objection arises out of the manner in which the above question is framed, which it may be well to notice: He who is the only begotten Son has no brethren; but Christ has brethren; for we also are the sons of God: therefore he is not the only begotten Son of God. To this we reply, by making a distinction as to the manner in which Christ and we are the sons of God; for there is a difference in this respect which it is well for us to keep in view whilst treating this subject. Christ is the only begotten, the natural, proper and eternal Son of God; but we are the sons of God, adopted of the Father by grace for the sake of Christ.

That these things may be manifest, we must explain in a few words, Who are called sons, and in how many ways this title is used: then consider, Who are, and who are called the sons of God.

They are, and are called sons who are either born sons, or are adopted as such.

They are born sons who begin at one and the same time both to be and to be sons. These are either sons born from parents, or through grace. *Sons born from parents* are properly called natural sons, to whom the essence and nature of their parents is communicated, and that either wholly or in part. Now the essence and nature of our parents, of whom we were born, is communicated to us *in part;* but the divine essence is communicated from the Father *to Christ* wholly according to his Divinity. As we are, therefore, the natural sons of our parents, so Christ is according to his divine nature the natural and only Son of God, of the same essence and nature with the Father, out of whose substance he was begotten from everlasting, in a manner altogether beyond our comprehension. "As the Father hath life in himself, so also hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." (John 5: 26.) The Father has, therefore, communicated to him the life by which he himself lives by himself, and by which he quickens all creatures, which life is that one and eternal Deity by whom all things are.

They are sons by grace, who at one and the same time began to be, and to be the sons of God. That they are sons results, either from the grace of creation, or from the grace of conception by the Holy Ghost and union with the Word.

The Angels and Adam before the fall are Sons of God by the grace of creation; because God created them that he might have them for sons, and that they on the other hand might acknowledge and praise him as their gracious Father. These are, indeed, improperly called sons born by grace, but yet they are such in as far as they began, at one and the same time, to exist and to be sons.

Christ alone according to his human nature is the Son of God, by the grace of conception by the Holy Ghost, and of union with the Word; because, according to this, he was the Son of God by grace, even from the very moment in which he began to be man and to be born; and that because, by virtue of the Holy Ghost, he alone was from the substance of the Virgin, pure from all stain or corruption, and was personally united with the Word.

They are adopted sons who do not begin at one and the same time to be, and to be sons; but who were already before they were adopted, or who had an existence before their adoption as sons. They have been made sons by law and the will of him who has adopted them, and given them the right and title of sons, so that they occupy the same place as if they were natural sons. So Adam, after his fall, and all those who are regenerated, are the adopted sons of God, received into favor with him on account of his natural Son, Jesus Christ. All these were the children of wrath before they were adopted into the family and church of Christ.

From what has now been said, it is plain, as well how we are the sons of God, which is by adoption, as how Christ is the only begotten Son of God, viz. in two ways. First, according to his Divinity, because as touching this he was begotten from everlasting from the substance of the Father; "and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." (John 1: 14.) And, secondly, according to his humanity in some sort, because even in relation to this, he was born after such a manner as no one else ever was, from a pure and chaste Virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Christ is also called the first begotten, 1. According to his Divinity in respect both to time and dignity. 2. According to his humanity, in respect to dignity alone, and that on account of the miraculous and peculiar manner of his conception, and on account of the gifts by which he excels all others, angels and men. It was the right of the first begotten to have a double portion of the inheritance, whilst each of the rest had only a single portion. The reason of this was on account of the office which he, as the first-begotten, filled; for he was placed over the rest and ruled them. "Christ is the first born of every creature: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." (Col. 1: 15, 18.)

Christ is also called God's own Son, because he was begotten and not adopted; "Who spared not his own Son." (Rom. 8: 32.)

There are also forms of speech which it becomes us to observe carefully in speaking of the filiation of Christ and us. Christ is called the natural Son of God according to his Divinity, because he was begotten from everlasting from the Father. But according to his humanity he is not so called; but is called the Son of God by grace, and that not the grace of adoption, but of conception by the Holy Ghost, and of union with the Word. The reason why Christ is not, according to his humanity, the natural Son of God, is, because he is not begotten from the essence of the Father, according to his humanity. And the reason why he is not the adopted Son of God in respect to his humanity, is, because he was not made a Son of no son, but because in the very moment in which he began to be, he began also to be a Son. Angels are called the natural sons of God, but it is by the grace of creation, as man also was before his fall. Those who are regenerated in this life are called the sons of God, not by the grace of

creation, but of adoption. Grace, therefore, in respect to adoption, is as the general to the particular; for there are three or four degrees, or as it were, species, of grace, viz: that of creation, of conception by the Holy Ghost, of union with the Word, and of adoption, as appears from what we have said.

A table of the Sons of God.

- The sons of God are,
  - 1. Born,
    - 1. Of parents, who are properly called natural sons, to whom is communicated the essence of their parents,
      - 1. *Wholly:* as the divine essence of the Father is wholly communicated to Christ according to his Divinity.
      - 2. *In part:* as the essence of our parents is communicated to us only in part.
    - 2. Of God through the grace,
      - 1. Of creation as, { Angels, Adam before the fall.
      - 2. Of conception by the Holy Ghost and union with the Word, as Christ according to his human nature.
  - 2. Adopted.
    - 1. Of God, { As Adam after the fall, As all the regenerate.
    - 2. Of men, &c.

Another table of those who are the Sons of God

- Of the Sons of God,
  - 1. One is natural, viz: the Word of the Eternal Father.
  - 2. All others are by the grace,
    - 1. Of creation, as Angels and Adam before the fall,
    - 2 Of conception by the Holy Ghost, and of union with the Word, as Christ according to his human nature.
    - 3. Of adoption, as Adam after the fall, and all the regenerate.

From these remarks and the distinction we have made between those who are the children of God, the answer to the above named objection is apparent: He who has brethren is not the only begotten. Christ has brethren. Therefore he is not the only begotten. In answering this objection, the major must be more clearly distinguished: He that has brethren, that is, of the same generation and nature, is not the only begotten. But those who sustain the relation of brethren to Christ are not of the same generation and nature, for they are not begotten of the substance of the Father, but are only adopted of him by grace.

How then, it may be asked, are we the brethren of Christ? We reply that our brotherhood or fraternity with Christ consists in these four things: 1. In the similitude and likeness of human nature, and because we are born from Adam, the common father of all. 2. In his fraternal love towards us. 3. In our conformity with Christ, which consists in perfect righteousness and blessedness. 4. In the consummation of his benefits.

Obj. 2. He who has a generation unlike that of other sons, is said in respect thereof, to be the only begotten. Christ according to his humanity has a generation different from that of other sons, because he alone was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of a Virgin. Therefore Christ is called the only begotten according to his humanity, in respect to this generation from the Virgin, and not on account of his eternal generation from the Father, according to his Divinity. Ans. The major is true only of him who has a generation different from the whole race, that is, both in nature and in the mode of generation. But Christ according to his humanity has a generation different from us, not according to his nature, but only according to the mode of his generation; for according to his humanity he is consubstantial with us, having a human nature the same with ours in kind: the difference is only as to the miraculous manner in which he was conceived and born of the Virgin. Therefore, although he is the only begotten in respect to

this generation, yet in Scripture and in the Creed he is called the only begotten Son of God, not according to his human, but according to his divine nature. Now according to his human nature, Christ has brethren; but according to his divine nature he has no brethren, because he was begotten from everlasting from the essence of the Father. Of no one else is it said that "the Father hath given to him to have life in himself," and that "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Therefore he is expressly called the *only begotten of the Father*, and not of his mother. The phrase *only begotten* properly respects his nature and essence, and not his miraculous conception; and it signifies one that is begotten alone and not one that is begotten in an extraordinary manner.

Obj. Every son is either natural or adopted. Christ, according to his humanity, is not the natural Son of God. Therefore, he is adopted. Ans. The major of this syllogism is not sufficiently specific and clear, for there are sons of God by grace, as the angels, who are not sons by adoption, as we have already shown.

Hence we are now, in view of what has been said, led to ask what is meant by this article, *I believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God?* It means, 1. That I believe that Jesus is the only begotton Son of God; that is, the natural and proper Son, not having any brethren, begotten of the substance of the Father from everlasting, very God of very God. But this is not enough; for even the devils believe this, and tremble. Therefore, this is to be added, 2. I believe that he is the only begotten Son of God for me, and my salvation in particular: Or, I believe that he is the Son of God, that he may make me a son by adoption, and communicate to me and all the elect, the right and dignity of the sons of God, as it is said, "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (John 1: 14, 12. Matt. 3: 17. Ep. 1: 6.)

OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

The doctrine concerning the only begotten Son of God is the foundation of our salvation, and has been variously corrupted and opposed by heretics, in different periods of the church. It is important, therefore, that we should here more fully explain and establish this doctrine. There are four things which are especially to be considered in relation to the Divinity of Christ, the Son of God:

I. *Whether Christ, beside his soul and body, is, and has been a subsistent or person:*
II. *Whether he is a person distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost:*
III. *Whether he be equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost:*
IV. *Whether he be con-substantial, that is, of one and the same substance with both.*

There are, therefore, just as many principal propositions to be demonstrated against different heretics:

1. That Christ, born of the Virgin, besides his soul and body, is a person.
2. That he is a person, distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost.
3. That he is equal to both.
4. That he is of one and the same essence, or con-substantial.

There are two ways of collecting arguments out of the Scriptures, in favor of the Divinity of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The one is when the arguments are gathered according to the order of the books of the Bible; this is the most laborious and lengthy method. The other, which is the shortest and easiest mode, because it assists the memory, and therefore the one which we shall follow, is, according to certain classes or sorts of arguments, under which those testimonies of scripture that properly belong to them are arranged.

I. The Son of God, the Word, is, and has been a subsistent, or person before, and beside the flesh which he assumed.

This proposition is to be proven against ancient and modern heretics, as Ebion, Cerinthus, Samosatenus, Photinus, Servetus, and others. The different classes of arguments by which we prove the hypostasis, or personal existence of the Word, before and besides the flesh which he assumed, may be reduced to eight or nine:

1. To the first class belong those passages of Scripture which expressly teach and distinguish two natures in Christ, and which affirm of the Word that he was made man, was manifested in the flesh, assumed our nature, &c., as, "The Word was made of flesh." "He took of him the seed of Abraham." "God was manifested in the flesh." "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God." "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." "To this end was I born, and for this came I into the world." "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." "Before Abraham was I am." (John 1: 14. Heb. 2: 16. 1 Tim. 3: 16. 1 John 4: 3. John 3: 13; 18: 37. Heb. 2; 14. John 8: 58.) There is, therefore, one nature which appeared in the flesh, assumed our nature, descended from heaven, and came into the world, was made a partaker of flesh and blood, and was before Abraham. And there is also another nature which was assumed, in which he came and in which he appeared; for assuming and being assumed are not the same. Therefore, inasmuch as the Word assumed human nature, he must of necessity be different from it, and must have had an existence before that which he took upon him, and into which he was not changed, but has a subsistence or hypostasis different and distinct from the flesh which he assumed. *The argument is after this sort:* He that assumes, is before that which is assumed. The Word, or Son, is said to have taken upon him our nature, and to have been made flesh. Therefore, he was before that which he assumed.

All those testimonies of the word of God, which distinguish the Word, who assumed our nature from that which he took upon himself, are here in point: "Concerning his Son, Jesus Christ, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with

power according to the Spirit of holiness." "Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for evermore." "Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (Rom. 1: 3, 4; 9: 5. 1 Pet. 3: 18.) Therefore, there is something in Christ which is not of the seed of David, and of the fathers, and which was not put to death. "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2: 19.) Therefore, there is in Christ one nature which is destroyed, and another which raises up that which is destroyed, viz., the Word, who is called by John "the only begotten Son." (John 1: 18.)

Obj. 1. The Word, by which is meant this preacher Jesus, was made flesh, that is, a mortal man. Ans. This is a bold and manifest corruption of the meaning of God's word. The Word is said to have been God before he assumed our flesh (through him all things were made) to have come to his own, to enlighten every man that cometh into the world, was made flesh, and has imparted of his fullness to us all. Therefore, this Word was before all men. He was even before Adam himself, whilst Abraham and Moses were illuminated by him, and received out of his fullness. "I am the living bread which came down from Heaven." "Christ went by the Spirit in the days of Noah and preached to the spirits that are in prison, which were disobedient in times past." (John 6: 51. 1 Pet. 3: 19.) But the human nature of this preacher Jesus did not descend from heaven, and was not in the times of Noah.

Obj. 2. Christ, man, is called God in the New Testament. Therefore, those who affirm that there is an invisible nature in this man, corrupt the Scripture; because, when I affirm that thou art a scholar, I do not mean that a scholar is in thee. Ans. 1. Christ is called by the Apostle the Son of God, according to the Spirit. The Scriptures declare this man to be God, and that "in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." Christ says of himself, "Destroy this body." And the author of the epistle to the Hebrews makes mention of the tabernacle of the human nature, and calls his flesh a veil, viz., of his Divinity: "He suffered in the flesh." "The Word was made flesh, and came unto his own." (1 Pet. 4: 1. John 1: 14, 11.) Therefore, there must needs be another nature in the flesh. 2. The Scriptures expressly attribute opposite properties to Christ, which cannot be found in any one at the same time. They also attribute to him a finite and an infinite nature. "Before Abraham was, I am." (John 8: 58.) Therefore, there is a necessity that this should be understood of different natures by the communication of properties, for Christ is never described as being such a God as is made, or as is efficacious in the hearts of men on account of his excellent gifts.

2. To the second division of arguments, are to be referred those declarations of Scripture in which Christ is called the proper Son of God, because he is not adopted, but begotten from the substance of the Father. "Who spared not his own Son." (Rom. 8: 38.) The Jews exclaimed against Christ in the presence of Pilate, "that he made himself the Son of God," viz., the proper and natural Son; otherwise, they themselves would have been guilty of the blasphemy of which they accused Christ, since they acknowledged themselves the sons of God. And this is explained more clearly in another place, where the Jews are said to have desired to kill Christ, because he said "that God was his Father, making himself equal with God;" that is, his proper and peculiar Father, which is inferred from

this, that he claimed for himself that power of working which is peculiar to God. (John 5: 18.) Therefore, we conclude from the words of the Jews, that Christ called himself the proper and natural Son of God, having the right of a Son by nature, which others obtain by grace through him: because, if Christ had only called himself the Son of God, either by adoption or by grace, the Jews could not have charged him with blasphemy; for so they would have passed sentence upon themselves as blasphemers, since they boasted that they were also the children of God. And further, if this had been a calumny on the part of the Jews, Christ would certainly have refuted it, or at least repelled it as far as he himself was concerned; but instead of this, he admitted what they said, and showed by solid reasons that he was truly what he professed to be. Christ is, therefore, the proper Son of God, and there is necessarily another nature in him besides that which he assumed, according to which he is the proper Son of God.

Objections of Servetus: 1. Christ is called the proper Son of God because he was made by God, just as the church is called the peculiar people of God. Ans. This is a corruption; for the Apostle, in the passage before cited, opposes the proper Son of God to us and to Angels, who are not the proper sons of God; for the Angels are the sons of God by the grace of creation, and we by that of adoption. But Christ alone is the proper and and natural Son of God, because he was begotten from the substance of the Father.

Obj. 2. But it is no where said in the Scriptures that Christ is the natural Son of God. Therefore it is nothing more than an invention of men. Ans. It is true, indeed, that it is no where said in the Bible that Christ is the natural Son of God, but there are expressions used of a similar and equivalent signification, such as, "God's own Son," "the only begotten Son," &c. And then the same conclusion is necessarily arrived at as we have already shown, by the argument of the Apostle to the Romans, and that of the Jews in John.

Obj. 3. The Word was indeed always in God, but not the Son. Christ was called the Son in respect to his future filiation or Sonship in the flesh which he assumed. Therefore he is not the natural Son of God. Ans. 1. Nay, he was not thus called the Son of God, for his humanity did not proceed from the substance of the Father. 2. The Word is called such a Son as he to whom the Father gave to have life in himself. 3. There would not, according to the above objection, have been a personal distinction between the Father and the Son, because the Word according to Servetus was no hypostasis or person. Therefore the Father would have been without the Son, or would have been the same with the Son as Sabellius erroneously taught.

3. This class of arguments comprises those declarations of Scripture in which Christ is called the only begotten Son of God. "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," &c. (John 1: 14; 3: 16.) Now Christ is called the only begotten Son because he has no brethren. But according to his human nature he has brethren, as it is said, "that it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren." "For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2: 17, 11.) Therefore there is in Christ another nature, according to which he is the only begotten Son of the Father, and in relation to which he has no brethren.

Obj. Christ is called the only begotten, because the man Jesus is the only one born of the Virgin by the Holy Ghost. Ans. This is a false interpretation of the language of Scripture, for 1. He alone is the only begotten who is from the substance of the Father. 2. Because the generation of the Word from the Father, and that of Christ from the Virgin, are often distinguished in the Scriptures, as it is said of Wisdom in Prov. 8: 25, "Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth," (or as it is otherwise rendered) *begotten*. "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." And in Matthew we read that Jesus, who is called Christ, was born of the Virgin Mary. 3 The only begotten is opposed to Angels and men, because Christ is the Son, not by the grace of adoption as is true of men, nor by that of creation as is true of Angels, but by nature. Here, however, it is objected on the part of some, that when it is said, "We beheld his glory," it means the glory of the man Jesus; but this is an incorrect reference, because there is no antecedent to which we can properly refer the person spoken of, but the Word. The words which precede, are to be carefully noticed: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory," that is, the glory of the Word. If, therefore, the Word is called, and is the only begotten, then certainly, *only begotten*, in this passage, does not signify generation from Mary, but from the Father from everlasting.

4. To this division belong all those testimonies of Scripture in which the title Son of God is ascribed to Christ as to his divine nature, even before he was made flesh; as, "Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name? and what is his Son's name?" "God hath spoken unto us by his Son, by whom also he made the world." "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world." (Prov. 30: 4. Heb. 1: 2. John 3: 17.) The Father sent his Son into the world. But human nature is born into the world. Therefore the Son was before he was sent into the world.

To this class of arguments we must also refer all those portions of Scripture which attribute divine works to the Son before his assumption of humanity, as, "by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth." "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." "What things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." (Col. 1: 16. John 5: 17, 19.) But the humanity of Christ does not accomplish whatever the Father does, nor does it effect any thing in the same manner in which the Father does, even now since it has been assumed, much less from the beginning. Therefore, according to this, the Son did all things from the beginning according to his divine nature, which is something different from the flesh which he assumed. "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whom soever the Son will reveal him." If the Son now revealed God the Father to those who lived before he assumed our nature, he must have existed previously.

Those testimonies, moreover, which expressly attribute to Christ the name of God according to his divine nature, are here in place. These are to be diligently collected; because the enemies of the Divinity of Christ strongly insist that the name of God is only attributed to him in respect to his human nature. "The Word was God." "God was manifested in the flesh." "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy

the works of the devil." Therefore, there is in Christ a nature which was called the Son of God even before he was made flesh. Hence heretics cannot say that Christ is only now called the Son of God, since his miraculous conception by the Holy Ghost.

5. Under this class of arguments we shall comprise those passages of Scripture which speak of the Word. The Word, concerning which John speaks, was a person apart from and before the assumption of humanity. The Son is the Word. Therefore the Son is a person apart from and before the flesh assumed. All the different parts of the description of the Word in the first chapter of the gospel of John, combine to establish the truth of the major of the above syllogism. Thus it is said that he was in the beginning of the world and was truly God, that through him all creatures were made, that he was the author of all life and light in men, that he was in the world from the beginning, even when he was not known, and acknowledged, &c. Now all these things, which are proper only of some one that is subsistent, living, intelligent and operating, being ascribed to the Word, most clearly prove that he was a person, and that before the man Jesus was born of the Virgin. The minor is proven from John 1 : 14 : "We beheld his glory," (viz. that of the incarnate Word) "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." Likewise, he who is called the Word is, in the same chapter, called the only begotten Son existing in the bosom of the Father. And again, John says that it was through the Word, and Paul says that it was through the Son that God created all things. Therefore, he who is called the Word and the Son of God, is a person which has existed before Jesus was born, and now dwells personally in the human nature which he assumed.

6. Under this head we shall consider those declarations of holy writ which testify of Christ that he is the Wisdom of God. The argument is this: The wisdom of God, through which all things were made, is eternal. The Son is that Wisdom. Therefore the Son is eternal, and by consequence existed before the assumption of humanity. The major is proven from what is said of Wisdom in Prov. 8 : 22 : "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old. When there were no depths I was brought forth." The minor is thus proven: 1. Wisdom, in the passage just cited, is said to have been begotten. But to be begotten, when this is spoken of an intelligent nature, is nothing else than to be a Son. 2. Christ calls himself the wisdom of God. "Therefore also said the Wisdom of God, I will send them prophets," &c. (Luke 11 : 49.) 3. Paul also calls Christ the wisdom of God. "We preach Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God. (1 Cor. 1 : 24.) 4. The same things are ascribed by Solomon to wisdom which the Scriptures in other places attribute with peculiar efficacy to the Son, and which are more largely treated of in the book of Wisdom. Therefore Wisdom is the Son of God.

7. To this class belong those testimonies of Scripture concerning the office of the Mediator, which is to collect and to preserve the whole church by his merit and efficacy. That the church might be fully redeemed it was necessary that there should be a Mediator, on account of whom and through whom it might be gathered and defended. This Mediator is neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost. Therefore Christ is the Mediator of the whole church existing already from the beginning of the world. The church of old was received into favor on account of Christ who was to come; but

this could not have been had he not existed; for no merit or efficacy can be from one who is not. Wherefore it is clearly evident that Christ had an existence before his incarnation; for it is not possible that there could have been friendship between God and men without a Mediator already existing. And hence, as there was a state of reconciliation between God and the faithful under the Old Testament, there must have been some Mediator of the church. The Scriptures now teach that there is only one Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Therefore Christ must have existed before his appearance in the flesh. The same thing may be inferred from the office of the Mediator, which is not only to appease the Father by intercession and sacrifice, but also to confer upon the faithful all those good things which he has obtained by his power and efficacy, to make known the will of God to men, to institute a ministry, to collect and preserve the church, and that wholly. "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Therefore, neither Adam nor any of the faithful of old knew God, except through the Son, consequently the Son must then have existed.

Those testimonies of Scripture which speak of the efficacy of Christ, are to be referred to this division as well as those which speak of his merit. Thus it is said: "He hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church." "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." (Ep. 1: 22; 2: 20.) Christ is, therefore, the foundation, the head, the upholder, and governor of the church, and hence existed before the church was. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." "No man cometh to the Father but by me." "I give unto them eternal life." "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." "He was that true light, which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world." "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." "He gave some apostles, some prophets, and some pastors and teachers." (John 14: 6; 10: 28; 1: 4, 9. Ep. 2: 18; 4: 11.) The apostle Peter says that the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets, foretelling the sufferings that should come unto Christ. Therefore, Christ revealed the will of God, instituted the ministry, established and governs the church; and in as much as he has done all this from the very beginning of the church, it is not to be doubted but that he has always existed. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing." (John 6: 39.) Therefore he preserves the church, and so has always been, because the church has always been preserved.

There is a remarkable testimony in the prophecy of Malachi, 3: 1. "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in." This is spoken by Christ himself, through the prophet, and is confirmed by this argument: He for whom a way is prepared, is Christ. And he who promises, is the one for whom the way is prepared. Therefore, he who promises is Christ. The major is plain; for not the Father, but Christ was expected, and it was he that came after John the Baptist. The minor is proven from the text. "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the

way before me." Therefore Christ was, before he assumed our nature, because he sent his messenger, John, and was very God before he was manifested in the flesh; for he calls it his temple, to which he says he was about to come. No one but God has a temple built for his worship. Therefore, it is blasphemy to say that Christ did not exist before he assumed flesh. Nor is it to be objected because he speaks in the third person: saying the Lord will come to his temple: for he clearly shows that it is the Son who is meant by that Lord; I, the Lord, who sent John before me, and who also am the messenger of the covenant. Hence, it is possible that the prophet changes the person speaking, and represents the Father speaking in regard to sending his Son.

8. This class of arguments contains the testimonies in relation to the angel who appeared to the fathers under the Old Testament, as the messenger of God. "The angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads," &c. (Gen. 48: 16.) This angel of the Lord, of whose appearance we have many instances recorded in the Old Testament, the church has always confessed to have been the Son of God, and that for three reasons: 1. Because the whole Scriptures teach that the Son of God is the messenger of the Father to the church, and that he performs the office of Mediator. "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in." "Unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." (Mal. 3: 1. Heb. 1: 8; 13: 8.) 2. Because, what is said by Moses concerning this angel, is said concerning Christ by Paul, that he was tempted in the desert by the Israelites. From these, and similar things, we may present the argument thus: The angel, or messenger of the Father was before the incarnation. That angel was neither the Father, nor the Holy Ghost, but the Son, because the Son alone is the messenger of the Father, and the mediator. Therefore, the Son was a person subsisting before he took upon him our nature.

9. In this last division are comprehended all those places in the Scripture in which Christ is expressly called *the true God*, by name and properties. "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all God blessed for ever." "This is the true God, and eternal life." (Rom. 9: 5. 1 John 5: 20.) Here the man Jesus Christ is expressly called the true God. If, therefore, he is the true God, he has always existed; for the one true God is from everlasting. "God was manifested in the flesh." Here Christ is, without doubt, called God.

To this class of arguments also properly belong all those testimonies which attribute to Christ the work of creation, miracles, redemption, regeneration, protection, glorification, and also the government of the whole world, for which infinite wisdom, power, knowledge, and omnipresence are necessary, of which we have already at different times furnished quite a number of proofs. From these it is evident that not only the name, but also the properties of the true God, are attributed to the man Christ, the latter of which furnish the strongest proofs of his proper Divinity; for, whilst the titles of the true God which are attributed to Christ, may, after a certain manner, be expounded metaphorically, the divine properties cannot be so wrested as to lose their proper weight. And if we fortify ourselves with arguments of this kind, our adversaries cannot stand, but will be

compelled, willing or unwilling, to confess that Christ had an existence before his incarnation.

This proposition being established, that the Son subsisted before his manifestation in the flesh, we must further enquire, what was he? the Creator, or a creature. Was he a Spirit co-eternal with God, or created in time? An answer to these questions is returned in the description of the Word, and of wisdom which is found in the first chapter of the gospel of John, and in the eighth chapter of the Proverbs of Solomon.

II. That the Son is a person really distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost.

That the person of the Son is distinct from that of the Father, must be maintained and taught on account of Noetus, Sabellius, and their adherents, who affirm that the essence of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is of the same person, or that the three are one person; but that they have different names, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, on account of having different offices.

To prove that the Son is distinct from the Father, not only in office, but also in his personality, the following arguments are sufficient: 1. No one is s son of himself, but every son is of a father, who is distinct from him that is begotten, or else the father and the son would be the same in the same respect, which is absurd. Therefore, the Word is the Son of the Father, and not the Father himself.

2. The Scriptures teach that there are three distinct persons in the Godhead. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." "And God said let us make man in our own image;" (he did not say I will make man.) "I and my Father are one." "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." "Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." (1 John 5: 7. Gen. 1: 26. John 10: 30; 14: 26; 15: 26. Matt. 28: 19.) The Holy Ghost also descended in the shape of a dove, the Son was baptized in Jordan, and the voice of the Father was heard from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3: 16.)

3. There are express testimonies of Scripture which affirm that the Father is one, the Son is one, and the Holy Ghost is another. "There is another that beareth witness of me," viz., the Father speaking from heaven. "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me." "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter." (John 5: 32, 37; 7: 16; 5: 19; 14: 16.)

4. There are distinct attributes ascribed to the different persons of the Godhead. The Father begat the Son, and the Son is begotten. The Father sent, and the Son is sent. It is not said of the Father that he was made flesh, but of the Son alone. The Son, and not the Father, took upon him the seed of Abraham. The Son was made a supplicating intercessor, priest, prophet, king, and mediator, and not the Father. Therefore, the Father and Son are different. The Father is of himself through

the Son: the Son is not of himself, nor through the Father, but through himself from the Father. Finally, Christ was baptized, and not the Father, nor the Holy Ghost. Therefore, Christ is distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost.

III. That the Son is equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

That the Son is true God, equal with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, that he was not made or created before all creature, that he is not God on account of divine qualities and operations, and that he is not inferior to the other persons of the Godhead, as Arius, Eunomius, Samosatenus, Servetus, and other heretics of a similar character imagine; but that he is by nature God, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, is proven,

1. By explicit testimonies from the Scriptures. "This is the will of the Father, that all men should honour the Son as they honour the Father;" but the Father ought to be honoured as the true God, and not as an imaginary Deity; so therefore the Son is to be honored. "Whatsoever the Father doeth, the Son does likewise." "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." "Christ is over all God blessed for ever." "This is the true God and eternal life." "The second man is the Lord from heaven." "All things that he hath are mine." "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." (John 5: 23; 5: 19; 5: 26. Rom. 9: 5. 1 John 5: 20. 1 Cor. 15: 47. Col. 2: 9. Phil. 2: 6.)

2. He is the true, proper, and natural Son of God, begotten from the essence of the Father. And if he is begotten from the essence of God, the same is, therefore, communicated to him whole and entire, since the divine essence is infinite, indivisible, and not communicated in part. Therefore, inasmuch as the Son has the whole essence communicated to him, he is, for this reason, equal with the Father, and, consequently, true God.

3. The Scriptures attribute all the essential properties of Deity to the Son, not less than to the Father, as that he is eternal. "Before the hills, was I brought forth." "In the beginning was the Word." (Prov. 8: 25. John 1: 1.) He is immense: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." (John 3: 13. Ep. 3: 17.) He is omnipotent: "What things the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." "According to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." "Upholding all things by the word by his power." (John 5: 19. Phil. 3: 21. Heb. 1: 3.) His wisdom is immense: "His name shall be called Counsellor." "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son," &c. "But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man." "Now are we sure that thou knowest all things." (Is. 9: 6. John 2: 54; 16: 30.) He is the sanctifier of the church: "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Eph. 5: 25, 26.) He is unchangeable: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. 24: 35.) He is the truth itself, yea the

fountain of truth: "Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true." "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." (John 8: 14; 14: 6.) His mercy is unspeakable: "As Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God." (Ep. 5: 2.) He is angry with sin, and punishes even those sins that are committed in secret: "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." "And said to the rocks and mountains, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." (John 3: 36. Rev. 6: 16.) Therefore, the Son is by nature God, and equal with the Father.

4. The Scriptures, in like manner, attribute all divine works equally to the Father and the Son. He is the creator of all things, for it is said in the gospel of John: "All things were made by him." He is the preserver and governor of all things: "Upholding all things by the word of his power." (Heb. 1: 3.) Then there is attributed to Christ those things which appertain specially to the salvation of the church. He sends prophets, apostles, and other ministers of the church: "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." "And he gave some prophets, and some apostles, and some evangelists," &c. (John 20: 21. Ep. 4: 11.) He furnishes his ministers with necessary gifts and graces: "I will give you a mouth, and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." (Luke 21: 15.) He reveals unto us the doctrine of salvation: "The only begotten which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John 1: 18.) He confirms this doctrine by miracles: "And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." (Mark 16: 20.) He instituted the sacraments: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. 11: 23. Matt. 28: 19.) He reveals the future: "I, Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches." "He shall receive of mine, and show it unto you." (Rev. 22: 16. John 16: 14.) He collects the church: "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." "Other sheep also I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." (John 10: 14, 16.) He illuminates the understandings of men: "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom he will reveal him." "Then opened he their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures." (Matt. 11: 27. Luke 24: 45.) He regenerates and sanctifies: "This is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." (John 1: 33. Tit. 2: 14.) He governs the lives and actions of the godly: "Without me ye can do nothing." "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." (John 15: 5. Gal. 2: 20.) He comforts the godly in temptations: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." (Matt. 11: 28. John 14: 27.) He confirms and defends those that are converted against the temptations of the devil, and preserves them by a true faith unto the end: "Be of good comfort, I have overcome the world." "My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my

hand." (John 16: 33; 10: 28.) He hears those that call upon him: "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." "For this I besought the Lord thrice, and he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for thee." (John 14: 14. 2 Cor. 12: 8.) He forgives sins, justifies, and adopts us as the children of God: "The knowledge of my righteous servant shall justify many." "That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins." "But as many as received him to them gave he power to be the sons of God." (Is. 53: 11. Matt. 9: 6. John 1: 12.) He gives eternal life and salvation: "I give unto them eternal life." "This is the true God and eternal life." (John 10: 28. 1 John 5: 20.) He will judge the world: "He was ordained of God, to be the Judge of quick and dead." "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." (Acts 10: 42; 17: 32.) These divine works attributed to the Son, differ from the divine properties which are also ascribed to him, as effects differ from their causes.

5. In the Scriptures, equal and common honor, and worship, are also attributed to the Father and the Son; which equality follows from an equality of essence and operations. Christ is worshipped by the angels and the church: "Let all the angels of God worship him." He himself said: "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." (Heb. 1: 6. John 5: 23.) Faith and trust are to be reposed in him: "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." (John 14: 1.) He is called God absolutely, as the Father: "This is the true God, and eternal life." He himself instituted the sacraments in which he is worshipped. He is seated at the right of God, upon the throne of his Father, and rules with equal power with the Father. He is adored with equal honor with the Father by the church triumphant. "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev. 5: 13.) Finally, he is the bridegroom, the husband, the head and king of the church, which is his house, and temple, &c.

Obj. He who has all things from another, is inferior to him from whom he has them. The Son has all things from the Father. Therefore, he is inferior to the Father. Ans. The major is true only of him who has any thing by the grace of the giver; for he may not have it, and is, therefore, by nature inferior; but it is not true of him who has all things by generation, or by nature, as the Son of God, the Word has all things from the Father. "The Father hath given to the Son to have life in himself as he hath life in himself." "All mine are thine, and thine are mine." (John 5: 26; 17: 10.)

Obj. 2. He who does whatever he does by the will of another going before, is inferior to him by whose will he is controlled. The Son acts by the will of the Father going before, and preventing. Therefore, he is inferior to the Father. Ans. The order of operating on the part of the persons of the Godhead, does not take away their equality; for it is thus that God reveals himself in his word; because the Father does all things through the Son and Holy Ghost; the Son by the Father, through the Spirit, &c. Neither is this an order of time, or dignity, or nature, but only of persons; so that the Son wills and does only such things as the Father wills and does, and that with the same power and authority, which,

instead of doing away with their equality, only establishes it the more fully.

IV. That the Son is con-substantial, or of the same essence with the Father and the Holy Ghost.

Having established the former propositions, we are now naturally led to prove that the Son is con-substantial; that is, of the same essence with the Father. Heretics are willing to confess that the Son is of *like substance*, or essence with the Father, which is, indeed, true, but does not express the whole truth in relation to this subject. Two men are, also, like-substantial, who are, nevertheless, not con-substantial. But the Father and the Son are not only of similar, but of one, and the same essence, and are one God; for there is only one divine essence which is the same, and is wholly in every one of the persons of the Godhead. The Father is, indeed, one person, and the Son is another; but yet the Father is not one God, and the Son another God, &c. John says, "that there are three that bear record in heaven;" they are three persons, but not three Gods that bear witness; "for these three are one." Therefore, we declare against Arius, that Christ is not only like-substantial, but also con-substantial with the Father, having the same divine essence with the Father, which is confirmed by the following arguments:

1. Because the Son is called Jehovah, who is only one essence. And not only is the name, but the properties, also, which belong to Jehovah alone, are attributed to Christ: "And this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness." "Lo this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord." This expected God and Saviour is the Messiah, who, in the same sense, is called "the desire of all nations." (Jer. 23: 6. Is. 25: 9. Hag. 1: 7.)

Those passages of Scripture are here also in place in which the angel of the Lord is called Jehovah himself; and, also, those which in the Old Testament are spoken concerning Jehovah, and in the new are cited and applied to Christ: "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." (Ps. 68: 18. Eph. 4: 8.) Jehovah was tempted in the desert; the same is said of Christ. "And let all the angels of God worship him." "And thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands." (Ps. 97: 7. Heb. 1: 6. Ps. 102: 26. Heb. 1: 10.)

2. Because he is called the true God, who is but one, as it is said, "This is the true God, and eternal life." "Who is over all God blessed for ever." (1 John 5: 20. Rom. 9: 5.)

3. Because there is one and the same Spirit of the Father and the Son, proceeding from, and proper unto both through whom the Father and the Son work. They are, therefore, not distinct in essence, but only in persons, otherwise each one would have his own peculiar Spirit, and that different from the Spirit of the other.

4. Because Christ is the only begotten and proper Son of the Father, having his essence communicated to him the same, and entire, in as much as the Godhead can neither be multiplied or divided.

From these considerations it is easy to return an answer to the sophisms of heretics, especially if we consider the source whence they proceed; for

they either rest their conclusions upon false principles; or they transfer to the Creator those things which are peculiar to created things; or they attribute to the Divinity of Christ those things which are spoken of his human nature; or they confound the office of the mediator with his nature or person; or they exclude the Son and Holy Ghost from those things which they ascribe to the Father as the fountain of all the divine works of the Son and Holy Ghost; or they detract from the Son and Holy Ghost those things by which the Divinity of the Father is distinguished from creatures and idols; or, finally, they corrupt the language of Scripture.

General rules by which an answer may be returned to the principal heresies and objections of heretics.

1. Heretics reason from false principles when they argue that, if God begat one Son he could have begotten more, and the Son might have begotten another son, &c. We reply to this objection by laying down this rule, *That we are to judge of God according to the revelation which he has made in his word, and not according to the brain of heretics.* Hence, as he has revealed himself in his word as such an one as could have begotten only one Son, and has and willed to have only one and not more, we should rest satisfied with this and not go beyond what he has been pleased to reveal.

2. They assume many things which are true in relation to things that are finite, but which are false when they are applied to God who is infinite, as, for example, when they argue, That three cannot be one: Three persons really distinct cannot be one essence: He that begets and he that is begotten are not the same essence: An infinite person cannot beget another that is infinite: One essence cannot be communicated to many: He who communicates his own essence, whole and entire to another, does not remain what he was, &c. To these and similar objections often brought forward by those who oppose the doctrine of the Divinity of the Son and Holy Ghost, we reply, not by simply denying what they affirm, but by making a distinction according to this rule: *Principles which are true concerning a nature that is finite, are not to be transferred to the infinite essence of God; for when this is done they become false.*

3. When they argue from things peculiar to the human nature, as that Christ suffered, died, &c., which things cannot be said of God; we reply to them by making a distinction between the natures in Christ, according to this rule: *Those things which are proper to the human nature of Christ are not to be transferred to his divine nature.*

4. When they conclude from those things which are peculiar to the office of the mediator, that God cannot be sent by God; we must reply according to the rule of Cyril: *Sending and obedience do not take away or conflict with equality of power, or of essence; or, inequality of office does not set aside equality of nature, or of persons.* It is in accordance with this rule that we are also to explain that declaration of Christ: *My Father is greater than I;* viz. as it respects the office and human nature of the mediator, but not as it respects his divine essence. (John 14: 28.)

5. When they conclude that the Son is not God, or that he is inferior to the Father, because he sometimes in the Scriptures attributes his own works to the Father, as the fountain of all divine operations, as in John 14: 10,

"The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works;" an answer is to be returned according to this rule: *Those things which are attributed to the Father as the fountain, are not to be considered as belonging to him exclusively, as though the Son did not participate in them; for they are communicated to him that he may have them as his own.* For what things soever the Father doeth, these doeth the Son *likewise.*

6. So when they argue from those passages of Scripture in which the Father is opposed to false deities which make no mention of the Son, that this omission is a manifest proof that the Son is not that one God, an answer is easily given according to this rule: *When any thing is attributed to any one of the persons of the Godhead that is opposed to creatures, or false deities, that he may thereby be distinguished from them, the other persons are not excluded, but only those things in regard to which a comparison is made.* Or, When one divine person, as the Father, is opposed to creatures, or idols, and glory and honor are ascribed to him, it does not follow that the Son and Holy Ghost are not of the same divine essence with the one thus opposed, and that they do not possess equal honor and glory: Or, the divine properties, operations and honor are attributed to any one of the persons in such a manner that they are not removed from the other persons of the Godhead, but only from creatures: Or, a superlative or exclusive manner of speaking in regard to one person, does not exclude the other persons of the Godhead; but creatures and false gods with whom the true God in one or more persons, is opposed. As, "the Father is greater than all," that is, all creatures, and not the Son or Holy Ghost. (John 10: 29.) "Of that day knoweth no one, but the Father only," that is, no creature. (Matt. 24: 36.) Hence an answer is also furnished to the declaration, "that they might know thee, the only true God." (John 17: 3.) The Son is not by this excluded as though he were not truly and properly God, but idols and false gods with whom the Father, the true God, is compared, are excluded.

7. Concerning the phrases and language of Scripture which they corrupt, we are to judge of them according to the circumstances connected with the passages referred to, and by a comparison of them with other passages, as, "he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father," (1 Cor. 15: 24.) in such a manner, doubtless, that he himself might retain it, just as the Father delivered the kingdom to the Son in such a way that he, nevertheless, did not lose it. So "the Son does nothing;" (John 5: 19.) that is, he does nothing of himself, or without the will of the Father going before, yet he acts by himself from the Father.

Special rules against the sophisms of heretics and such as are necessary for the understanding of Scripture.

1. There is nothing objectionable in the declaration that those who are equal in nature may be unequal in office.

2. That which the Father has given to the Son that he may retain, he will never take from him again; but that which has been given and committed to him for a certain time, he must of necessity resign.

3. A consequence which is drawn from that which is relative to that which is absolute, is not of force.

4. It does not follow that he who has his person from another, has his essence likewise from another.

5. That which is proper to one nature only, is attributed to the person in the concrete, but not otherwise than in respect to that nature to which it is proper.

6. Wisdom is two-fold: there is one kind which is in creatures, which is the order of things in nature wisely constituted: and there is another wisdom which is in God, which, when it is opposed to creatures, is the divine mind itself, or the eternal decree of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost in relation to this order. But when this wisdom in God is distinguished from God, then it is properly taken for the Son of God. The former wisdom is created, the latter uncreated.

7. Whenever one person of the Godhead is opposed in the Scripture to creatures, or false gods, and thus distinguished from them, the other persons are not thereby excluded, but only creatures with whom there is a comparison of the true God. The same is to be observed in all exclusive and superlative declarations.

8. When God is named absolutely in the Scriptures, it is always to be understood as referring to the true God.

9. Whereas the Son and Holy Ghost are from the Father; and whereas the Father works through the Son and Holy Ghost, and did not humble himself, as the Son; the Scriptures oftentimes, and especially in the discourses of Christ, understand by the name of the Father, also the Son and Holy Ghost.

10. When God is considered absolutely, or by himself, or is opposed to creatures, the three persons are comprehended; but when he is opposed to the Son, the first person of the Godhead, which is the Father, is understood.

11. The Scriptures distinguish the persons when they oppose or compare them with each other, or when they express their personal properties, by which they restrict to one of the persons of the Godhead, the name of God common to them all. But they embrace and mean all the persons of the Godhead, when they oppose the true God to creatures, or false gods, or consider him absolutely according to his nature.

12. The Son is wont to refer to the Father that which he has in common with him, not making any mention of himself, in as much as he speaks in the person of the mediator.

13. The Son is said to see, to learn, to hear and to work as from the Father in respect to both natures, but yet with a just and proper distinction; for the will of God is made known to his human understanding by revelation. But his Godhead by itself, and in his own nature, knows and sees most perfectly from everlasting the will of the Father.

14. If the external operations of the three persons were distinct they would make distinct essences, because, if when one would work another should rest, there would be different essences.

15. When God is called the Father of Christ and of the faithful, it does not follow that he is their, and his Father in the same name.

16. The Father has never been without the Son, nor the Father and the Son without the Spirit, in as much as the Godhead can neither be increased, diminished, nor changed.

Certain sophisms of heretics against the eternal Deity of the Son briefly refuted.

1. Three persons are not one in essence. Jehovah is one essence. Therefore there cannot be three persons in the Godhead. Ans. The major holds true only of things finite and created; and not of the uncreated, infinite, most simple and individual essence of the Godhead.

2. He that has a beginning is not eternal. The Son has a beginning. Therefore he is not that eternal Jehovah who is the Father. Ans. That is not eternal which has a beginning of essence and time; but the Son is said to have had a beginning, not of essence and time; but only of person or of order and of the mode of existing. For he has one and the same essence with the Father, not in time, but by eternal generation. "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." (Micah 5: 2. John 17: 5; 5: 26.) If it be further objected, that he who has a beginning of person or of origin, as the Son has, is not Jehovah; we reply that if this proposition is understood universally, it is false; for the Scriptures distinctly teach, both that the Son is Jehovah, and that he was begotten, that is, had an origin of person from the Father.

3. Our union with God is a consent of will. The union of the Son with the Father is of the same character, as it is said, "that they may be one as we are one." (John 17: 11.) Therefore the union of the Son with the Father is not of essence, but only a consent and agreement of will. Ans. There is more in the conclusion than in the premises; for the conclusion is universal whilst the minor is specific; for there is besides the consent of the faithful to the will of God, also another union of the Son with the Father, viz., of essence; because they are one God. "I and my Father are one." "I am in the Father and the Father in me." "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." "Who is the express image of his person." (John 10: 30; 14: 9, 10. Heb. 1: 3.)

4. Besides him in whom the whole Deity is, there is not another in whom it is likewise. The whole Deity is in the Father. Therefore the Godhead is not in the Son. Ans. We deny the major, because the same essence which is in the Father, is also entire in the Son and Holy Ghost.

5. The divine essence is not begotten. But the Son is begotten. Therefore he is not the same divine essence which the Father is. Ans. Nothing can be concluded from mere particulars; for the major, when expounded generally, is false, that whatever is the divine essence is not begotten.

6. Where there are distinct operations, at least such as are internal, there there are also distinct essences. There are distinct internal operations of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Therefore their essences are distinct. Ans. The major is true of persons having a finite nature; but may be inverted when understood of persons having an infinite essence; for where there are distinct operations *ad intra*, which consist in the communicating of essence, there it must needs be one and the same, and that the whole essence, because it is communicated entire to whomsoever it is made over.

7. Christ is the Son of God according to that nature, in respect to which

he is called the Son in the Scriptures. But he is called the Son according to his human nature only. Therefore he is the Son of God according to this alone, and consequently is not very God. Ans. The minor is false, because the Son is said to have descended from heaven, to be in heaven when his flesh was on earth. The Father is said to have created all things through the Son. These things are not said of the Son according to his human nature.

8. The Son has a head and is less than the Father. Therefore he is not one and the same essence with the Father. Ans. The Son has a head in respect to his human nature, and his office as mediator. These things, however, do not detract any thing from his Divinity.

9. The divine essence is incarnate. The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are the divine essence. Therefore the three are incarnate. Ans. We deny the consequence; for nothing can be inferred with certainty from mere particulars. The major cannot be established universally; for not whatever is the divine essence is incarnate, that is, not every person subsisting in it is incarnate; or the divine essence is not incarnate in the three persons, but only in one, and that in the person of the Son.

10. The Father only is the true God, as it is said, John 17: 3, "That they might know thee, the only true God." Therefore the Son is not the true God. Ans. 1. According to the sixth general rule, there is here not an opposition of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; but of the true God, with idols and creatures. Therefore the particle *only* does not exclude the Son and Holy Ghost from Deity, but only those to whom he is opposed. 2. There is a fallacy in dividing clauses of mutual coherence and necessary connection; for it follows in the passage above referred to, "and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Therefore eternal life also consists in this, that Jesus Christ, sent of the Father, might likewise be known to be the true God, as it is said, "This is the true God and eternal life." 3. There is also a fallacy in refering the exclusive particle *only* to the subject *thee*, to which it does not belong; but to the predicate the *true God*, which the article in the Greek plainly shows; for the sense is, that they might know thee, the Father, to be that God, who only is the true God.

11. Christ distinguishes himself from the Father by saying, "my Father is greater than I." Therefore he is not equal and con-substantial with the Father. Ans. He separates and distinguishes himself from the Father, 1. In respect to his human nature. 2. In respect to the office of mediator. The Father, therefore, is greater than the Son, not as to his essence, in which the Son is equal with the Father, but as to his office and human nature. It is resolved in accordance with the fourth general rule.

12. The mediator between God and man is not God himself. But the Son is the mediator between God and man. Therefore he is not God. Ans. The major is false, because it might follow for the same reason, that the mediator between God and man is not man.

Reply 1. The major is thus proven: God is not inferior to himself. The mediator with God is inferior to him. Therefore he is not God. Ans. The minor is true of the office of Christ, in which sense he is inferior to God; but it is not true when understood of his nature, according to the fourth general rule: Inequality of office does not take away equality of nature or of persons.

Rep. 2. The Son is mediator with Jehovah. But the Son is not

mediator with himself. Therefore he is not Jehovah. Ans. We remark again that nothing can be inferred from mere particulars. The major is not general: for the Son is not mediator with whomsoever is Jehovah; but with the Father.

Rep. 3. Then the Son and Holy Ghost are not truly reconciled, or they are reconciled without a mediator. Ans. We deny the consequence, because the same will belongs to the three persons. When the Father is appeased the Son and Holy Ghost are also reconciled.

Rep. 4. The Son is mediator with him whom he reconciles. But the Son does not only reconcile the Father, but also himself. Therefore he is mediator with himself, which is absurd. Ans. We reply to the major: That the Son is properly said to be mediator with him whom he so appeases by his satisfaction, that the decree and purpose of atonement may seem to have originally sprung from him. But this is the Father alone. Therefore the Son is not, in this sense, mediator with himself, but with the Father alone. Again, it is not absurd to say that the Son is mediator towards or with himself; for it is not absurd that he should carry on the offices, both of God accepting and of the mediator making reconciliation, but in different respects: the former by reason of his divine nature; the latter by reason of the office of mediator.

It is proper to compare these objections with those which are brought forward under the subject of the Trinity. For the same objections and sophisms which are brought against the divine essence and the Trinity itself, are brought against each single person of the Godhead; and those with which one person is assailed, are the same which are brought against the essence of God. Besides some objections were there merely proposed which are here more fully refuted. More may be seen on this subject in the first vol. of Ursinus, from page 115 to 125.

Question 34. Wherefore callest thou him our Lord?

Answer. Because he has redeemed us, both soul and body, from all our sins, not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood, and hath delivered us from all the power of the devil, and thus hath made us his own property.

EXPOSITION.

Two things are here to be considered:

I. *In what sense Christ is called Lord.*
II. *For what causes, and in how many ways he is our Lord.*

I. In what sense Christ is called Lord.

To be Lord is to have a right over some thing or person. Christ, therefore, is our Lord and the Lord of all, 1. Because he has dominion over us, and over all things: he has a care for all things, keeps and preserves all, and especially those who have been purchased and redeemed by his blood. 2. Because all things are subject to him, and we are bound to serve him, in body and soul, that he may be glorified by us.

The name Lord belongs to both natures of Christ, just as that of Prophet, Priest and King; for the names of the office, benefits, dignity and beneficence of Christ towards us are affirmed of his whole person, not by the communication of properties, as the names of the two natures and attributes of Christ, but properly in respect to each nature. For both natures of Christ will and secure our redemption: the human nature paid the price of our redemption by dying for us, and the divine gives and offers to the Father this price, and applies it unto us by the Spirit. Christ is, therefore, our Lord not only in respect to his divine nature, which has created us, but also in respect to his humanity; for even in as far as he is man, the person of Christ is Lord over all angels and men.

II. For what causes, and in how many ways he is our Lord.

Christ is our Lord, not only in one, but in many respects.

1. *By right of creation*, sustenance and government in its general character, as well as that which he has in common with the Father and Holy Ghost. Hence it is said, "all mine are thine, and thine are mine." (John 17 : 10.) The general dominion of Christ is that which extends itself not only to us, but to all men, even the wicked and the devils themselves, although not in the same respect. For 1. He created us to eternal life, but them to destruction. 2. He has a right and power over the wicked and devils, to make them do what he pleases, so that without his will they cannot so much as move; and if he wills he has power to reduce them to nothing, as the history which we have in the gospel of the man possessed with devils, sufficiently testifies. But besides this right which he likewise has over us, he is also called our Lord, because he guards us as his own peculiar people, whom he has purchased with his blood, and sanctifies by his Spirit; and, furthermore, by this his Spirit, he rules and governs us, and works in our hearts faith and obedience.

2. *By the right of redemption* peculiar to himself; because he alone is the mediator, who has redeemed us by his blood, from sin and death, delivered us from the power of the devil and set us apart for himself. The way in which we have been redeemed is most precious, because it was far greater to redeem us with his blood than with money. Therefore, the right of possession which he has over us is also of the strongest character. But, seeing that he has redeemed us, it is evident that we were slaves. We were indeed the servants and slaves of the devil, from whose tyranny Christ has delivered us; hence we are now the servants of Christ; because, notwithstanding we were by nature his enemies, and deserving of destruction, he has preserved and redeemed us. Slaves were first called *servi* by the Romans, from *servando*, which properly means *preserved*, because, being taken captives by their enemies, they were preserved, when they might have been slain. This dominion of Christ over us is special, inasmuch as it extends only to the church.

Obj. If we have been redeemed from the power of the devil, the price of our redemption has been given to him; for from whose power we are redeemed, to him is the ransom due. But the price of our redemption was not given to Satan. Therefore we have not been redeemed from his power. Ans. The price of our deliverance is due him from whose power we have been redeemed, provided he is supreme Lord, and holds a dominion over

us by right. But God alone, and not Satan, is our Supreme Lord, and holds a dominion over us justly. Therefore the price of our redemption is due to God, and not to the devil. It is true indeed, that Satan enslaved us by the just judgment of God, on account of sin, taking us by force, and thus making inroads upon the possessions of another. But Christ, that strong armed and greater one, having made satisfaction for our sins, and broken the power of the devil, liberated us from his tyranny. Therefore Christ has redeemed us in respect to God, because he paid to him our ransom, and in respect to the devil, he has liberated us, and asserted and secured our freedom.

3. *By reason of our preservation* Christ is our Lord; because he defends us even to the end, and keeps us unto eternal life, not only by preserving our bodies from injuries, but our souls also from sin. For our preservation must be understood not only concerning our first rescue from the power of the devil, but also concerning our continual preservation and the consummation of his benefits. Christ himself speaks of this preservation when he says, "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost." "No man shall pluck them out of my hands." (John 17 : 12; 10 : 28.) He preserves the wicked unto destruction, and that merely with a temporal defence.

4. *In respect to ordination* or appointment; because the Father ordained the Word, or this person, Christ, to this, that he might through him accomplish all things in heaven and on earth. For Christ is our Lord not only in that he preserves us, having rescued us from the power of the devil and made us the sons of God; but also because the Father has given us to him, and has constituted him our Prince, King and Head. "He hath appointed him heir of all things." "Thine they were and thou gavest them me. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the church," &c. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance to Israel," &c. (Heb. 1 : 2. John 17 : 6; 6 : 37. Eph. 1 : 22. Acts 5 : 31.) Since Christ, therefore, is our Lord in a far more excellent manner than others, we are also much more strongly obligated to render obedience to him; for he is our Lord in such a manner that he may do with us what he wills, and has an absolute right over us, which he, however, uses only for our salvation; for we receive from him more and infinitely greater benefits than from any one else. Hence we ought ever to acknowledge the dominion which Christ has over us, which acknowledgement to be complete, implies 1. A confession of this great benefit, that Christ should condescend to be our Lord. 2. A confession of our obligation and duty to him, which may be comprehended in serving, worshipping and loving him.

What, therefore, is the meaning of this article, *I believe in Christ, our Lord?* Three things are here to be observed: 1. *To believe that Christ is Lord.* This, however, is not sufficient, for we believe also that the devil is lord; but not of all, nor of us, as we believe Christ is Lord of us all. 2. *To believe that Christ is Lord both of all and of us.* Neither is this all that is necessary for us to believe; for the devils also believe that Christ is their Lord, as it is plain that he has a right and authority over them. 3. *To believe in Christ as our Lord;* that is, to believe that he is our Lord in such a manner that we may repose our confidence in him. And this is

what we are especially required to believe. When we, therefore, say that we believe in our Lord, we believe, 1. That the Son of God is the Creator of all things, and therefore has a right over all creatures. "All things that the Father hath are mine." 2. That he is in a peculiar manner constituted the Lord, the defender and preserver of the church, because he has redeemed it with his blood. 3. That the Son of God is also my Lord, that I am one of his subjects, that I am redeemed by his blood and continually preserved by him, so that I am bound to be grateful to him. And, further, that his dominion over me is such as is calculated to promote my good, and that I am saved by him as a most precious possession, a peculiar purchase, secured at the greatest expense.

FOURTEENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 35. What is the meaning of these words, "He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary?"

Answer. That God's eternal Son, who is, and continueth true and eternal God, took upon him the very nature of man, of the flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, that he might also be the true seed of David, like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted.

EXPOSITION.

The exposition of this question is necessary on account of ancient and modern heretics, who have denied, and who now deny, that the flesh of Christ was taken from the substance of the Virgin. The Eutychians argue: Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost; therefore the flesh of Christ was produced from the substance of the Divinity, or from the essence of the Holy Ghost, and by this means the divine nature was changed into the human. The fallacy of this argument arises from an incorrect use of a figurative mode of speaking; for the terms *by*, *from*, or *of* the Holy Ghost do not signify a material, but an efficient cause, the power, efficacy, virtue, or operation of the Holy Ghost; for it was by the virtue, or operation of the Holy Ghost that the Son of God was conceived in the womb of the Virgin, according to the words of the angel: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." (Luke 1: 35.) Christ is also called the seed of Abraham, the Son of David. Therefore he took his flesh from these fathers, and not from the Holy Ghost. As we are born of God because he made us, so Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost; because it was by his virtue and operation that he was conceived; and not because he was formed from the substance of the Holy Ghost.

Obj. But if the particle *of* or *by* does not signify a material cause when used of the Holy Ghost, then, in like manner, it cannot signify this when it is said of Christ that he was born *of* the Virgin Mary. Ans. The cases are not exactly parallel, for in relation to the latter article, it behooved Christ to be born of the seed of David; but when it is said he was conceived of, or by the Holy Ghost, the particle *by* cannot refer to or signify a material case, for these reasons: 1. Because, if this were true, then that which immediately follows, viz., that he was born of the Virgin Mary,

would not be true. 2. Because God is not susceptible of any change, and therefore, cannot be changed into flesh. 3. Because the Word assumed flesh, but was not changed into it.

What, therefore, does the conception of Christ by the Holy Ghost signify? Three things are comprehended in it. 1. That Christ was miraculously conceived in the womb of the Virgin, by the immediate action, or operation of the Holy Ghost, without the seed and substance of man, so that his human nature was formed from his mother alone, contrary to the order of things which God has established in nature, as it is said, "The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." (Luke 1: 35.) If it be here objected, that God has also formed us, we reply, that we have been formed mediately, and not immediately as Christ was, from which it is evident that the examples are not the same.

2. The Holy Ghost miraculously sanctified that which was conceived and produced in the womb of the Virgin, so that original sin did not attach itself to that which was thus formed; for it did not become the Word, the Son of God, to assume a nature polluted with sin, for the following reasons: 1. That he might be a pure sacrifice; for it behooved him to make satisfaction for sin. 2. That he might also, by his purity, sanctify others. 3. That we might know that whatever the Son says is truth; for that which is born of flesh, which is sinful, and not sanctified, is flesh, falsehood and vanity.

Obj. But Christ was born of a mother that was a sinner. Therefore he himself had sin. Ans. The Holy Ghost knows best how to distinguish and separate sin from the nature of man; for sin is not from the nature of man, but was added to it from the devil.

3. That the hypostatical union of the two natures, the divine and the human, was formed by the same Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin, immediately and at the very moment of his conception.

The meaning, therefore, of this article, *he was conceived by the Holy Ghost*, is, that the Holy Ghost was the immediate author of the miraculous conception of the flesh of Christ — that he separated all impurity of original sin from that which was thus conceived, and united the flesh with the Word in a personal union in the very moment of conception.

He was born of the Virgin Mary. It behooved the Messiah to be born of the Virgin according to the predictions of the prophets, that he might be a High Priest without sin, and the type or figure of our spiritual regeneration, which is not of the will of flesh, but of God. Hence it is added in the Creed, that Christ was born of *the Virgin Mary:*

1. That the truth of the human nature assumed by the Son of God might thus be signified, that is to say, that Christ was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, and was born a true man from the substance of Mary his mother; or, the flesh of Christ, although miraculously conceived, was nevertheless taken, and born of the Virgin.

2. That we may know that Christ has descended from the fathers from whom Mary also was, that is to say, that he was the true seed of Abraham, being born from his seed, and that he was the Son of David, being born from the daughter of David, according to the prophecies and promises.

3. That we may know that the Scriptures are fulfilled, which declared, "Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son." "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." (Is. 7: 14. Gen. 3: 15.) From this

fulfillment of prophecy, by which it was foretold that Christ should be born of a Virgin of the family of David, and that by a miraculous conception, which the prophets did in a manner foretell, it is most clearly manifest that this man Jesus, born of the Virgin, is the promised Messiah, or the Christ, the redeemer of the human race.

4. That we may know that Christ was sanctified in the womb of the Virgin, by the power of the Holy Ghost, and is, therefore, pure and without sin.

5. That we may know that there is an analogy between the nativity of Christ, and the regeneration of the faithful; for the birth of Christ of the Virgin is a sign of our spiritual regeneration, which is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Question 36. What profit dost thou receive by Christ's holy conception and nativity?

Answer. That he is our mediator, and with his innocence and perfect holiness covers, in the sight of God, my sins, wherein I was conceived and brought forth.

EXPOSITION.

There are two benefits resulting from the holy conception and nativity of Christ. First, the confirmation of our faith that he is the mediator; and, secondly, the consolation that we are justified before God through him. The reason of this arises from the fact, that he could not be the mediator between God and man, who is not himself very man, and perfectly righteous, and who is not united with the Word. It behooved the mediator to be, by nature, true God and man, that he might preserve the salvation purchased for us. "For such an High-Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." (Heb. 7: 26.)

What, therefore, is the meaning of this article, *I believe in Jesus Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary?*

First, I believe that this natural Son of God was made true man in a miraculous manner, and that he is one Christ having two natures, the divine and human, joined together by a personal union, and that he was sanctified by the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb.

Secondly, I believe that he is such, true God and true man, and yet but one Christ, and that he was sanctified from his mother's womb, that he might redeem and sanctify me, (which he could not do unless sanctification and union were effected in him) and that I have the right of the adoption of the sons of God, for the sake of this, his Son, conceived and born in the manner just described.

OF THE TWO NATURES IN CHRIST.

The article of the incarnation, or of the two natures in Christ, and their hypostatical union is next to be considered. The questions which are here to be expounded somewhat largely, are the following:

I. *Are there two natures in the Mediator?*
II. *Do these natures constitute one or two persons?*
III. *If but one person, what is the nature of this union?*
IV. *Why was it necessary that the hypostatical union should be constituted?*

I. Are there two natures in the Mediator?

That Christ has a divine nature has already been proven. That he has a human nature was formerly denied by Marcion, and is to this day denied by the Swenckfieldians, who hold that Christ is a man only in name. It is, therefore, to be proven against heretics, that Christ is a true and natural man, consisting of a body and soul, perfectly and truly, and subject to all infirmities, sin excepted. The proofs of this are:

1. The testimonies of Scripture, which teach that Christ had all the parts of human nature, and that he was made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore, in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. 2: 11–18, & 4: 15.) Those passages of Scripture are here likewise in point, in which our Lord himself confirmed the truth of his human nature after his resurrection, as when he said to the disciples, "Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have," &c. (Luke 24: 39, 40.)

There have been those who have maintained that the Divinity of Christ was constituted the soul of his body. Thus Appollinarius taught, that Christ had indeed a true human nature, but that the Word was united to him in the place of a soul. This heresy is easily refuted by the words of Christ himself, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." (Matt. 27: 38.) The body now cannot be said to be sorrowful, for it is not susceptible of grief; neither can sadness be attributed to the Divinity, for this is free from every passion. "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit, and having thus said he gave up the ghost." (Luke 23: 46.) The spirit here signifies the soul, and not the Divinity, because the Divinity never departed from the human nature. And, again, it is said by Paul, Heb. 2: 17, "It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren." But without a soul he would not have been like unto his brethren in all things; for he would not have been a true man. Hence it must needs be that Christ had a human soul.

2. The same doctrine is also confirmed by the divine promises and prophecies; for the Messiah was promised to be such an one as would be the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the son of David, the son of a Virgin, &c. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." "Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son." "The book of the

generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb." "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." (Gen. 3 : 15. Is. 7 : 14. Matt. 1 : 1. Luke 1 : 42. Rom. 1 : 3.) The argument which is drawn from these declarations made in relation to the Messiah, is most convincing; for if the humanity which he assumed was from the seed of Abraham, and of David, then he had a real human nature.

3. The office of mediator demanded in Christ, our deliverer, a true human nature taken from ours, which had sinned, and which was to be redeemed through him, as we have shown in the former part of this work; for it behooved the same nature which had sinned, to suffer and make satisfaction for sin. Therefore, inasmuch as our nature sinned, Christ took this upon himself, and not a nature created out of nothing, or brought down from heaven, &c. Nor did it merely behoove our mediator to take upon him our nature, but it was further necessary that he should retain and keep it for ever; because the Father receives us into his favor only upon the condition that we remain engrafted into his Son. This consolation, too, that Christ is our brother, that he bears our nature, and is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, is necessary for us continually, even in eternity; for we should lose this consolation if Christ had not truly taken our nature, and would not retain it forever. Without this he would not be our brother.

Obj. 1. The flesh of Adam (that is, that which is made over to his posterity by generation) is sinful. But the flesh of Christ is not sinful. Therefore it is not of the flesh of Adam. Ans. There is here a fallacy of accident, in affirming that to be true of the substance which is true only by an accident. Since the flesh of Adam is not sinful in itself, but only by an accident, it also follows that the flesh of Christ is, only in respect to that accident, not the flesh of Adam, but is, according to the substance, the same flesh of Adam. Hence the argument ought rather to be changed thus: The flesh of Adam is true flesh. The flesh of Christ is the flesh of Adam. Therefore the flesh of Christ is true flesh.

Obj. 2. Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost. Therefore his flesh was produced and propagated from the substance of the Holy Ghost, and is for this reason no creature. Ans. We reply to this as we did to the objection brought forward under the thirty-fifth Question of the Catechism, that there is a fallacy in misunderstanding the figure of speech that is employed; inasmuch as the particle *by* does not signify a material, but an efficient cause.

Obj. 3. In God there are not two natures. Christ is God. Therefore there are not two natures in Christ. Ans. Nothing can be established by mere particulars: for the major does not express what is universally true; but what is true only of God, the Father, and Holy Ghost, and not of the incarnate Son, which is God manifested in the flesh.

Reply 1. But nothing can be added unto God by reason of his perfection. The Son is God. Therefore it is not possible to add human nature to his Divinity. Ans. We grant that nothing can be added to God by way of perfection, so as to change or perfect his essence; but there may be something added to him by copulation, or union; because he took upon him the seed of Abraham.

Rep. 2. God dwells in light inaccesible. Therefore it is not possible that human nature could ever approach him. Ans. It is conceded that human

nature cannot approach God, much less become personally united to him, unless he draw, assume, and unite it with himself.

Rep. 3. It is reproachful to God to be a creature. Ans. It would, indeed, be reproachful to God if he were to be changed into a creature; but that he should be united with a created nature, without a change of his own essence, is honorable unto God, as he, by this means, demonstrates to the whole world, his infinite wisdom, goodness and power.

II. Do the two natures of Christ constitute one or more persons?

There are two natures in Christ, whole and distinct; but only one person. Marcion taught that there were two Christs: the one crucified, the other not: and that the one came to the assistance of the other upon the cross. But it behooved one to be Christ, because it was necessary that one should be mediator both by merit and efficacy. Therefore there must needs be only one person.

Obj. 1. In whom there are two things which constitute two entire persons, in him there are also two persons. In Christ there are two natures which constitute two entire persons; for the Word is a complete person, whilst body and soul also constitute a person. Therefore there are two persons in Christ. Ans. We deny that part of the minor proposition which affirms that body and soul, in connection with the Word, constitute a person. This appears to be false, according to the definition which we have given of person, which does not belong to the human nature assumed by the Word; for it does not subsist by itself, but is sustained in, and by another, viz., in and by the Word. It was formed and assumed by the Word at one and the same time, and never would have existed, unless it had been assumed by the Word; nor could it even now exist were it not sustained by the Word. It is also a part of another, viz., of the mediator. But a person, according to the definition which we have given, is something individual, intelligent, subsisting by itself, not sustained by another, nor part of another. Hence it is evident that the human nature of Christ is not in, and of itself, a proper person, although it may be said to belong to the substance of Christ, and to be a part of him. The Word, however, was and is a person, and yet has a relation to our nature in as far as he has taken it upon himself. Hence it is correct to say: the person took the nature, and the nature assumed a nature; but we cannot correctly say, the person took a person, or the nature took a person; for the human nature which is in Christ was created in order that it might be made a part of another, so that we may properly say that it is a part of another; yet, when we so speak, all imperfections must be carefully excluded. Many, however, refrain from the use of such language in consequence of the dangers and abuses to which it may lead. Yet Damascenus and others often use this form of speaking.

Obj. 2. But, according to this the Word cannot be a person, because he is a part of the person; and that which is only a part cannot be a person. Ans. That which is only part of a person (and such a part that is not of itself a person) is no person; or, that which is a part of a person, is not that person of which it is a part. And so it may be said of the Word, if it be properly understood, that he is not the whole person of the mediator, although he is in, and of himself, a whole and complete person in respect to the Godhead.

Obj. 3. God and man are two persons. Christ is God and man. Therefore there are two persons in him. Ans. The major is true if we understand God and man as existing separately, without any union. But Christ is God and man in union. There is, therefore, here a fallacy of composition and division; for in the major proposition God and man are taken disjunctively, or as existing separately; and in the minor conjunctively, or as joined together.

Reply 1. But the Word united to himself a body and soul; and, therefore, a person. Ans. It is true, indeed, he united these to himself, but it was by a personal union, so that the body and soul which Christ took, do not exist by themselves, but in the person of the Word.

Reply 2. But he united to himself the essential parts of a person, and therefore he must also have united a person. Ans. This holds true merely in relation to such parts as subsist by themselves; but the body and soul of Christ do not subsist, nor could they ever have subsisted, unless in this union.

III. What is the union which exists between the two natures of Christ, and how was it made?

The union which exists between the two natures in Christ was made by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the very conception, in such a manner that the two natures subsist in the single person of Christ, without confusion, without change, indivisible, and inseparable, as it is expressed in the Calcedonian creed. It is called the hypostatical or personal union, because the two natures that are different are united in a mysterious manner in one person, whilst the essential properties of each nature are retained whole and entire. It is on account of this union that Christ is called, and is true God and man in respect to the distinct natures of which he is possessed: he is very God according to the divine, and very man according to the human nature. "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "The word was made flesh." "He took upon him the seed of Abraham." "God was manifested in the flesh." (Luke 1: 35. Col. 2: 9. John 1: 14. Heb. 2: 16. 1 Tim. 3: 16.)

IV. Why was it necessary that this hypostatical union should be effected?

The reasons which made it necessary that the mediator should be a true man, and perfectly righteous, and at the same time, true God, have been presented and explained under the 16th and 17th Questions of the Catechism, so that it is not necessary that we should here repeat them. For these reasons it was necessary that a personal union should be effected between the natures of the mediator, that he might at the same time be very man and very God, who might be able to restore and merit for us that righteousness and life which we have lost; for had not these natures concurred and met together in the person of the Word, as above described, he could not have *accomplished the work of our redemption.*

FIFTEENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 37. What dost thou understand by the words, "he suffered?"

Answer. That he, all the time he lived on earth, but especially at the end of his life, sustained in body and soul, the wrath of God against the sins of all mankind that so by his passion, as the only propitiatory sacrifice, he might redeem our body and soul from everlasting damnation; and obtain for us the favor of God, righteousness, and eternal life.

EXPOSITION.

We have, thus far, in our remarks upon the second part of the Creed, spoken only of the *person* of the mediator. We shall now proceed to speak of his *office*, which is included in the remaining part of the second division of the Creed, which treats of *God, the Son and our redemption.* And we shall, in the first place, speak of the humiliation of Christ, (the first part of his office) which we have comprehended in the fourth Article: *Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell.* The passion or suffering of Christ is placed immediately after his conception and nativity; 1. Because our entire salvation consists in his passion and death. 2. Because his whole life was one continued scene of suffering and privation. There are also many things which may, and ought to be profitably observed, in the history of the life which Christ spent on earth, written by those who were eye-witnesses of the facts which they record. For this does not only prove him to be the promised Messiah, in as much as all the predictions of the prophets meet, and are fulfilled in him; but it is also a consideration of the humiliation and obedience which he rendered unto his Father.

Those things which are to be considered in relation to the suffering of Christ, properly belong here; such as the history of Christ's passion, agreeing, as it does, with all that had been foretold concerning it, and the wonderful events with which it was connected — the causes and benefits of his suffering, and the example which Christ has furnished us, teaching us that we too must enter into glory through suffering.

But, for a more complete exposition of this Article, we shall consider more particularly,

I. *What we are to understand by the term passion, or what it was that Christ suffered:*
II. *Whether he suffered according to both natures:*
III. *What the impelling cause of his suffering was:*
IV. *What the final causes and fruits of his sufferings were.*

I. WHAT ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND BY THE PASSION OF CHRIST, OR WHAT DID CHRIST SUFFER?

By the term passion we are to understand the whole humiliation of Christ, or the obedience of his whole humiliation, all the miseries, infirmities, griefs, torments and ignominy to which he was subject, for our sakes, from the moment of his birth even to the hour of his death, as well in soul as in body. The principal part of his sorrows and anguish were the torments of soul, in which he felt and endured the wrath of God against the sins of all

mankind. By the term passion, however, we are to understand chiefly the closing scene, or last act of his life, in which he suffered extreme torments, both of body and soul, on account of our sins. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." "Surely he hath borne our griefs. He was wounded for our transgressions." "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him." (Matt. 26: 38; 27: 46. Is. 53: 4, 5, 10.)

What, therefore, did Christ suffer? 1. The privation or destitution of the highest felicity and joy, together with all those good things which he might have enjoyed. 2. All the infirmities of our nature, sin only excepted: he hungered, he thirsted, was fatigued, was afflicted with sadness and grief, &c. 3. Extreme want and poverty; "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head." (Matt. 8: 20.) 4. Infinite injuries, reproaches, calumnies, treacheries, envyings, slanders, blasphemies, rejections and contempt; "I am a worm, and no man; and a reproach of many." "He hath no form or comeliness, and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should desire him." (Ps. 22: 6. Is 53: 2.) 5. The temptations of the devil; "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Heb. 4: 15.) 6. The most reproachful and ignominious death, even that of the cross. 7. The keenest and most bitter anguish of soul, which is doubtless a sense of the wrath of God against the sins of the whole human race. It was this that caused him to exclaim, upon the cross, with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" as if he should say, Why dost thou not drive away from me such severe anguish and torments? Thus we see what, and how greatly Christ has suffered in our behalf.

But since the divine nature was united to the human, how is it possible that it was so oppressed and weakened as to break forth in such exclamations of anguish; and especially so when there were martyrs who were far more bold and courageous? The cause of this arises from the difference which there was in the punishment which Christ endured and that of martyrs. St. Lawrence, lying on the gridiron, did not experience the dreadful wrath of God, either against his own, or against the sins of the human race, the entire punishment of which was inflicted upon the Son of God, as Isaiah saith, he was stricken, and smitten of God for our sins: We say, then, that St. Lawrence did not feel the anger of an offended God piercing and wounding him; but felt that God was reconciled, and at peace with him; neither did he experience the horrors of death and hell as Christ did, but he had great consolation, because he suffered on account of confessing the gospel, and was assured that his sins were remitted by and for the sake of the Son of God, upon whom they were laid, according to what is said, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." (John 1: 29.) Hence it is easy to be accounted for, why St. Lawrence seemed to have more courage and presence of mind in his martyrdom, than Christ in his passion; and hence it is also that the human nature of Christ, although united to the Godhead, was made to sweat drops of blood in the garden, and to give vent to the mournful lamentation, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Not that there was any separation between the natures in Christ; but because the humanity was for a time forsaken by the Divinity, the Word being at rest, or quiet, (as Irenæus saith) and not bringing aid and deliverance to the afflicted humanity until a passion altogether sufficient might be endured and finished.

The satisfaction, therefore, which Christ made, or the suffering which he endured, differs from the torments of others. 1. *In form.* Christ felt and endured, both in body and soul, the entire wrath of God, which no one else has ever experienced. 2. *In the impelling cause.* Christ suffered not for his own sins, but for the sins of others. 3. *In the final cause, or end.* The passion of Christ is the ransom and only propitiatory sacrifice for our sins: the sufferings of others do not partake of this character, but are merely punishments, or trials, or attestations to the truth of the Gospel.

Obj. 1. According to the order of divine justice, the innocent ought not to suffer for the guilty: for justice demands the punishment of the offender. But Christ was an innocent person. Therefore his punishment is in opposition to the rule of justice; because, he being innocent, suffered for us, who were guilty. Ans. We reply to the major proposition, that the innocent ought not to suffer for the guilty, 1. Unless he willingly offer himself in the room, and stead of the guilty. 2. Unless he who thus voluntarily suffers, be able to make a sufficient ransom. 3. That he may be able to recover himself from these sufferings, and not perish under them. 4. That he may be able to bring it to pass, that those for whom he makes satisfaction, may not in future offend. 5. And that he be of the same nature with those for whom satisfaction is made. If such a satisfier as this can be substituted in the place of the offending, there is nothing in it that is contrary to the order of divine justice: for thus, both he who suffers, and those for whom it is endured, are saved. Christ, now, is such a satisfier; for he has accomplished all these things, and is not only a man of the same nature with us, but we are also members of his. And it is on account of this, our union with Christ our Head, that his punishment is truly ours, and that the Apostles every where teach, that we all suffered, and died in Christ: for when the body is afflicted, all the members suffer with it. This argument, however, will be enlarged, when we come to speak of the article of the forgiveness of sins. To sum up the whole: that any one may make satisfaction for others, these things must be present, and harmonize — it must be a sufficient satisfaction — it must be voluntary, and satisfy him to whom it is due; all of which conditions meet, and concur in the satisfaction of Christ.

Obj. 2. There must be a proportion between the satisfaction and the crime. But there is no proper proportion, between the sufferings of one man, and the sins of an infinite number of men. How, therefore, can the ransom which Christ alone paid, correspond with the sins of a vast number of men? Ans. It can, for these two causes: First, on account of the dignity of his person; and secondly, on account of the greatness of the punishment which he endured; for he suffered that which we were bound to suffer to all eternity. His passion, therefore, is equivalent to everlasting punishment, yea it exceeds it; because, that God should suffer, is more than that all creatures should perish. This was the greatest miracle, that the Son of God should cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me."

Reply 1. God cannot suffer and die. Christ suffered and died. Therefore, he is not God. Ans. We reply to the major proposition — God, that is, the person which is only God, cannot suffer, or is impassible, according to that in respect to which he is God. But Christ is not only God, but also man. Or we may concede the whole argument, if it be rightly understood;

for Christ is not God, in respect to that in which he suffered and died, that is, in respect to his human nature.

Reply 2. If Christ is not God, according to that which suffered, then that which is said, that God purchased the church with his own blood, is false. Ans. This is spoken according to the communication of properties, or according to the figure of speech, called synecdoche, which is true only in the concrete. God, that is, that person which is God and man, purchased the church with his blood, which he shed in respect to his humanity. By this communication of properties, we attribute to the whole person, what is peculiar to one nature, and that in the concrete only; because the term concrete signifies the person in which both natures centre, and the property of that nature of which this is predicated. Hence, there is nothing in the way of our affirming of the whole person, what is peculiar to one nature, provided that property reside in the person; whilst on the contrary, by the term abstract, only the properties of that nature are predicated of which they are peculiar. Let this, which is spoken incidentally, suffice.

Obj. 3. There is no just proportion between temporal and eternal punishment. Christ suffered only temporal punishments. Therefore, he could not make satisfaction for eternal punishments. Ans. There is, indeed, no proportion between temporal and eternal punishments, if it be in the same subject, but there may be, in different subjects. The temporal punishment of the Son of God, exceeds in dignity and worth, the eternal punishment of the whole world, for the reasons already explained.

Obj. 4. If Christ made satisfaction for all, then all ought to be saved. But all are not saved. Therefore, he did not make a perfect satisfaction. Ans. Christ satisfied for all, as it respects the sufficiency of the satisfaction which he made, but not as it respects the application thereof; for he fulfilled the law in a two-fold respect. First, by his own righteousness; and secondly, by making satisfaction for our sins, each of which is most perfect. But the satisfaction is made ours by an application, which is also two-fold; the former of which is made by God, when he justifies us on account of the merit of his Son, and brings it to pass that we cease from sin; the latter is accomplished by us through faith. For we apply unto ourselves, the merit of Christ, when by a true faith, we are fully persuaded that God for the sake of the satisfaction of his Son, remits unto us our sins. Without this application, the satisfaction of Christ is of no benefit to us.

Obj. 5. But there were also propitiatory sacrifices under the law of Moses. Ans. These were not properly expiatory, but were typical of the sacrifice of Christ, which alone is truly expiatory: "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls, and of goats should take away sins." "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." "He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world." (Heb. 10: 4. 1 John 1: 7; 2: 2.)

II. Did Christ suffer according to both natures?

Christ suffered, not according to both natures, nor according to the Divinity, but according to the human nature only, both in body and soul; for the divine nature is immutable, impassible, immortal, and life itself, and so cannot die. But he suffered in such a manner, according to his humanity, that by his passion and death, he satisfied for the sins of men. The

divine nature sustained the humanity, in the sorrows and pains which were endured, and raised it when dead unto life. "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." "Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh." "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore." "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again." (1 Pet. 2: 18; 4: 1. John 2: 19. Rev. 1: 18. John 10: 18.) These declarations testify that there was in Christ another nature, besides his flesh, which did not suffer and die. Irenæus says, "*As Christ was man, that he might be tempted, so he was the Word, that he might be glorified; the Word resting in him truly, that it might be possible for him to be tempted, crucified, and to die, and yet united to his humanity, that he might thus overcome temptation,*" *&c.*

Obj. But it is said that God purchased the church with his own blood; and hence the Deity must have suffered. Ans. This does not follow, because the form of speech is changed. When it is said God died, this is spoken figuratively by a synecdoche, or by the communication of properties, as we have already explained. But when it is said, the Deity suffered, this is spoken without a figure, because the subject is taken in the abstract. Again, no consequence from the concrete to the abstract is of any force. The concrete (which is God) signifies the subject having a form; the abstract (which is Deity) signifies the naked form, or the nature only. In this doctrine, therefore, the concrete is the name of the person, and the abstract the name of the nature. Hence, as this consequence does not follow: Man is composed of the elements, and is coporeal; therefore, the soul is composed of the elements, and is corporeal; so also it does not follow, Christ who is God died; therefore, the Deity of Christ died.

III. What was the impelling cause of the passion of Christ?

The cause which moved God to give his Son for us was: 1. His love towards the human race. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." (John 3: 16.) 2. The compassion of God towards those who were fallen in sin and death. "According to his mercy he saved us." (Titus 3: 5.) 3. The desire and purpose of God to revenge and repair the injury of the devil, who, in contempt and reproach of God, turned us from the Most High, and spoiled his image in us.

IV. What are the final causes, or the fruit of his passion?

The final causes, and fruits of the passion of Christ are the same, but in a different respect. In respect to Christ who suffered, they are the final causes; but in respect to us, they are the fruits. The principal final causes of the passion of Christ, are the revelation and manifestation of the love, mercy and justice of God, in that he did not spare his Son for us; and that his passion might be a sufficient ransom for our sins, or for our redemption. There are, therefore, two chief final causes, the glory of God and our salvation. The knowledge of the greatness of sin, pertains to the former, that we may perceive how great an evil sin is, and what it deserves. Our justification belongs to the latter, in which we have comprehended all the

benefits, which Christ merited by his death, and which he confers upon us by his coming forth from death. Hence we know that death is not hurtful to the godly, and is, therefore, not to be feared.

Question 38. Why did he suffer under Pontius Pilate, as his judge?

Answer. That he, being innocent, and yet condemned by a temporal judge, might thereby free us from the severe judgment of God, to which we were exposed.

EXPOSITION.

Mention is made of Pilate in the passion of Christ: 1. Because Christ obtained from this judge the testimony of his innocence. 2. That we might know that he, though declared innocent by this judge, was nevertheless condemned, and that by a regular judgment. 3. That we might be impressed by the fulfillment of prophecy. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is." "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." (Ez. 21: 27; Gen. 49: 10.) The name of Pilate is then mentioned that we may be fully certain, that Jesus is the Messiah that was to come; for then already the sceptre was taken away, because he was condemned by a Roman judge.

But why was it necessary that Christ should suffer under a judge, and be condemned by the ordinary course of the law?

1. That we may know that he was condemned of God himself, on account of our sins, and that he has, therefore, made satisfaction to God for us, that we may not be condemned by his severe judgment, just as he suffered death for us, that we might be delivered from it. For he who directs, and presides over ordinary judgments is God himself.

2. That Christ might obtain a testimony of his innocence from the very judge by whom he was condemned. Therefore it was not proper that he should have been secretly carried away by the Jews, nor put to death by a tumult; but when there was a lawful process and trial, and an investigation of all the accusations brought against him, the Father willed, first, that he should be examined that his innocence might thus be made to appear. Secondly, that he should be condemned that it might appear, that he being before declared innocent, was now condemned, not for his own, but for our crimes; and that thus his unjust sentence to death might be in the place of our most righteous condemnation. Thirdly, that he should be put to death, as well that the prophecies might be fulfilled, as that it might be made manifest that both the Jews and Gentiles were the executioners of this wicked deed. This circumstance, therefore, in the passion of Christ is to be carefully considered that we may know that this Jesus who was condemned by Pilate is the Messiah, and that we, through him, are delivered from the severe judgment of God.

Hence we are now led to ask, *What is it to believe in Jesus Christ, who suffered under Pontius Pilate?* To this we reply, that it does not merely include a historical faith, but it involves such a belief in Christ as leads us to confide in his passion. It is therefore to believe, first, that Christ, from

the very moment of his birth, endured, and sustained miseries of every kind; and that he, especially at the closing period of his life, suffered under Pilate the most severe torments both of body and soul, and that he felt the dreadful wrath of God, in making a satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and in appeasing the divine anger which had been excited by sin. It is also to believe, in the second place, that he endured all this in my behalf, and has thus satisfied also for my sins by his passion, and merited for me remission of sins, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life.

Question 39. Is there any thing more in his being crucified, than if he had died some other death?

Answer. Yes, there is; for thereby I am assured that he took on him the curse which lay upon me; for the death of the cross was accursed of God.

EXPOSITION.

The death of the cross is an aggravation of the punishment of Christ, and a confirmation of our faith. For if Christ was crucified, then he has taken upon himself the curse, because the death of the cross was a figure, or sign of the curse; and not only so, but he has also endured the curse for us, inasmuch as he was righteous in himself.

God, therefore, willed that his Son should endure the punishment of such an ignominious death, for these most satisfactory reasons:

1. That we may know that the curse which was laid upon him was due on account of our sins; for the death of the cross was accursed of God, according to what is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Deut. 21: 23.)

2. That the punishment might thus be made the heavier, and that we may, so much the more, be confirmed in faith, confidently believing that Christ, by his death, has taken upon himself our guilt, and endured the curse in our behalf that he might deliver us therefrom. Paul teaches this when he says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree." (Gal. 3: 13.)

3. That we may be excited to greater gratitude, considering what a detestable thing sin is, inasmuch as it could not be expiated unless by the most bitter and ignominious death of the only begotten Son of God.

4. That there might be a correspondence between the truth and the types. This was necessary in order that we may know that the types are all fulfilled in Christ. For the ancient sacrifices, which shadowed forth the sacrifice of Christ, were laid upon the wood, and before they were burned, they were lifted up on high by the priest, that it might be signified thereby that Christ should be lifted up upon the cross, that he might offer himself a holy sacrifice to the Father in our behalf. The same was adumbrated in Isaac who was laid upon the wood for the purpose of being sacrificed by his father. Finally, the brazen serpent, which Moses set upon a pole in the wilderness, was a type of Christ, as is evident from the application which Christ himself made of it when he said, "As Moses lifted up the

serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." (John 3: 14; 12: 32.)

What, therefore, is it to believe in Christ crucified? It is to believe that Christ was made subject to the curse for me, that he might deliver me therefrom.

SIXTEENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 40. Why was it necessary for Christ to humble himself even unto death?

Answer. Because with respect to the justice and truth of God, satisfaction for our sins could be made no otherwise than by the death of the Son of God.

EXPOSITION.

Under this question we are to consider:

I. *How Christ is said to have been dead:*
II. *Whether it was necessary that Christ should die:*
III. *For whom he has died.*

I. How Christ is said to have been dead.

The exposition of this question is necessary on account of heretics who have corrupted the sense of this article. Marcion denied that Christ did truly die, and affirmed also that the whole dispensation of the word in the flesh, and all those things which Christ endured for us were imaginary, and that he had only the appearance of a man, but was not such in reality. Nestorius separated the natures in Christ, and would not admit that the Son of God was crucified, and died; but said that this was true only of the man Christ. "*Do not exult and glory O thou Jew*, (said he) *thou hast not crucified God, but man.*" The Ubiquitarians believe that the human nature of Christ, from the moment of the incarnation, was so endowed with all the properties of Deity, that the only difference between this and the Godhead of Christ, is that the former has by accident what the latter has by and of itself. Hence it is, that they imagine that Christ in his death, yea, when he was concealed in the womb of the virgin, was not only as to his Deity, but also as to his body, in heaven, and everywhere. And this is what they call the form of God, concerning which Paul speaks in Phil. 2: 6.

1. But in opposition to all these we believe what is affirmed in the Creed, that Christ was truly dead, and that there was a real separation between his soul and body, and that of a real local character, so that his soul and body were not only not together everywhere, but they were not at the same time in one place; the soul was not where the body was, and the body was not where the soul was. "And Jesus when he had cried again with a loud voice yielded up the ghost." "And Jesus cried with a loud voice

and gave up the ghost." "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." "And he bowed his head and gave up the ghost." (Matt. 27: 50. Mark 15: 37. Luke 23: 46. John 19: 30.)

Obj. But he gave up the ghost just as virtue, that is, his Divinity is said to have gone out of him. Ans. There is a difference here which we must observe; for the Divinity whilst united with the humanity did, nevertheless, operate beyond and without it, but the soul departed from the body. The reason of this difference is, that the Divinity is something uncreated, and therefore infinite, whilst the soul is created, and therefore finite.

2. This is also to be added to what has been said, that although his soul was truly separated from his body, yet the Word did not desert the soul and body, but remained, notwithstanding personally united to each; so that, in this separation of soul and body, the two natures in Christ were not disjoined, or severed.

Obj. But if there was no such separation between the natures of Christ, why did he exclaim, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Ans. This cry was extorted from the suffering Son of God, not on account of any separation of the two natures, but on account of the delay of help and assistance: for the two natures in Christ ought not to be disjoined, because it is written, "God hath purchased the church with his own blood." (Acts 20: 28.) And it was necessary that he, who would die for our sins, should be the Son of God, that there might thus be a sufficient ransom. So it is also clearly manifest, that the union of the natures in Christ is no ubiquity: for his soul, being separated from his body, was not in the sepulchre with his body, and consequently not everywhere; because that which is everywhere can never be separated. And yet the union of the natures remained complete even in death, and in the grave.

II. Whether it was necessary that Christ should die for us.

It was necessary for Christ, in order that he might make satisfaction, not only to suffer, but also to die:

1. *On account of the justice of God.* Sin is an evil of such magnitude, that, according to the order of justice, it merits, and demands, the destruction of the sinner; for the reason, that that which is an offence against the highest good, can only be expiated by the most severe punishment and extreme destruction of the sinner, which is by his death according as it is written, "the wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6: 23.) Christ now assumed our place, and took upon himself the person of those who had sinned, and deserved death not only eternal, but also temporal; for we had merited that destruction which consists in a dissolution between the soul and the body, which being once effected, the body itself is also dissolved, as a house is said to be destroyed when the parts are separated from each other. It was necessary, therefore, that the Son of God should die in order that a sufficient ransom might thus be made, which could not have been effected by a mere creature.

Obj. But we have merited eternal death; therefore our souls ought not to be separated from our bodies, that they might suffer eternal condemnation. Ans. This is not a just conclusion, because nothing more can be properly inferred, than that it is necessary that our souls and bodies

should be again united that they may suffer eternal death, which will also, at length, come to pass. Therefore it was necessary that Christ should die for us, and that his soul should be separated from his body.

2. *On account of the truth of God.* For God had declared that he would punish sin with destruction, and the death of the transgressor: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Gen. 2: 17.) It was necessary that this threatening of God should be fulfilled after sin was once committed.

Obj. But Adam did not immediately die. Ans. He did not, indeed, instantly suffer temporal death, yet he straightway became mortal, and by degrees died, whilst he already experienced the beginning of eternal death: "I heard," said he, "thy voice, and was afraid, because I was naked." (Gen. 3: 10.) There was a fear, and sense of the wrath of God, a struggling with death, and a loss of all the good gifts which God conferred upon man. And yet the lenity, and compassion of the gospel was not wanting; for God had not expressly declared that he should certainly die wholly, and immediately. If this had been wanting he would have perished for ever. The Son of God offered, and brought in a mitigation, and raised man to a new life, that, notwithstanding he remained subject to temporal death, this was no longer injurious or fatal to him.

3. On account of the promises made to the fathers, by the prophets, such as that contained in Is. 53, 7: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before her shearers, so he opened not his mouth;" and also on account of the types and sacrifices, by which God signified that Christ should die such a death as would be a sufficient ransom for the sins of the world. This, now, was the work of no creature; but of the Son of God alone. Hence it became him to suffer such a painful death in our behalf.

4. Lastly, Christ himself foretold that his death was necessary. "For if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you." "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." (John 16: 7; 13: 8; 12: 32.) Three things, therefore, concur in this question: that it was necessary to make satisfaction to the justice and truth of God—that this satisfaction could only be made by death—and that by the death of the Son of God.

From what has now been said the following conclusions may be drawn: 1. That sin should especially be avoided by us, inasmuch as it could not be expiated except by the intervention of the death of the Son of God. 2. That we ought to be grateful to the Son of God for this great benefit which he has, out of his great goodness, conferred upon us. 3. That all our sins, however great, however many, and grievous they may be, are expiated by the death of Christ alone.

III. Did Christ die for all?

In answering this question we must make a distinction, so as to harmonise those passages of Scriptures which seem to teach contradictory doctrines. In some places Christ is said to have died for all, and for the whole world. "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." "That he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." "We thus judge that if one died for

all, then were all dead; and that he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again." "Who gave himself a ransom for all," &c. (John 2: 2. Heb. 2: 9. 2 Cor. 5: 15. 1 Tim. 2: 6.) The Scriptures, on the contrary, affirm in many places, that Christ died, prayed, offered himself, &c., only for many, for the elect, for his own people, for the Church, for his sheep, &c. "I pray for them; I pray not for the world; but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine," that is, the elect alone. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." "He shall save his people from their sins." "This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins." "Christ was once offered, to bear the sins of many." "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." "Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it." (John 17: 9. Matt. 20: 28; 15: 24; 1: 21. Heb. 9: 28. Is. 53: 11. Ep. 5: 25.)

What shall we say in view of these seemingly opposite passages of Scripture? Does the word of God contradict itself? By no means. But this will be the case, unless these declarations, which in some places seem to teach that Christ died for all, and in others that he died for a part only, can be reconciled by a proper and satisfactory distinction, which distinction, or reconciliation, is two-fold.

There are some who interpret these general declarations of the whole number of the faithful, or of all that believe; because the promises of the gospel properly belong to all those that believe, and because the Scriptures do often restrict them to such as believe: "Whosoever believeth in him shall not perish." "The righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe." "That through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." It is in this way that Ambrose interprets those passages which speak of the death of Christ as extending to all: "*The people of God*," says he, "*have their fulness, and although a large portion of men either neglect, or reject, the grace of the Saviour, yet there is a certain* SPECIAL UNIVERSALITY *of the elect, and fore-known, separated and discerned from the generality of all, that a whole world might seem to be saved out of a whole world; and all men might seem to be redeemed out of all men*," &c. In this way there is no repugnancy, or contradiction; for all those that believe are the many, the peculiar people, the Church, the sheep, the elect, &c., for whom Christ died, and gave himself.

Others reconcile these seemingly contradictory passages of Scripture by making a distinction between the sufficiency, and efficacy of the death of Christ. For there are certain contentious persons, who deny that these declarations which speak in a general way, are to be restricted to the faithful alone, that is, they deny that the letter itself, or the simple language of Scripture does thus limit them, and in proof thereof they bring forward those passages in which salvation seems to be attributed, not only to those that believe, but also to hypocrites and apostates, as it is said: "Denying the Lord which bought them." And, also, where it is said that they "have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins." (2 Pet. 2: 1; 1: 9.) But it is manifest that declarations of this kind are to be

understood either concerning the mere external appearance, and vain glorying of redemption, or of sanctification; or else of the sufficiency, and greatness of the merit of Christ. That it may not, therefore, be necessary for us to contend much with these captious and fastidious persons concerning the restriction of those passages which speak so generally (although it is most manifest in itself) and that those places which speak of the redemption of hypocrites may the more easily be reconciled, some prefer (and not without reason according to my judgment) to interpret those declarations, which in appearance seem to be contradictory, partly of the sufficiency, and partly of the application and efficacy of the death of Christ.

They affirm, therefore, that Christ died for all, and that he did not die for all; but in different respects. He died for all, as touching the sufficiency of the ransom which he paid; and not for all; but only for the elect, or those that believe, as touching the application and efficacy thereof. *The reason of the former* lies in this, that the atonement of Christ is sufficient for expiating all the sins of all men, or of the whole world, if only all men will make application thereof unto themselves by faith. For it cannot be said to be insufficient, unless we give countenance to that horrible blasphemy (which God forbid!) that some blame of the destruction of the ungodly results from a defect in the merit of the mediator. *The reason of the latter is*, because all the elect, or such as believe, and they alone, do apply unto themselves by faith the merit of Christ's death, together with the efficacy thereof, by which they obtain righteousness, and life according as it is said, "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath everlasting life." (John 3 : 36.) The rest are excluded from this efficacy of Christ's death by their own unbelief, as it is again said, "He that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3 : 36.) Those, therefore, whom the Scriptures exclude from the efficacy of Christ's death, cannot be said to be included in the number of those for whom he died as it respects the efficacy of his death, but only as to its sufficiency; because the death of Christ is also sufficient for their salvation, if they will but believe; and the only reason of their exclusion arises from their unbelief.

It is in the same way, that is, by making the same distinction that we reply to those who ask concerning the purpose of Christ, Did he will to die for all? For just as he died, so also he willed to die. Therefore, as he died for all, in respect to the sufficiency of his ransom; and for the faithful alone in respect to the efficacy of the same, so also he willed to die for all in general, as touching the sufficiency of his merit, that is, he willed to merit by his death, grace, righteousness, and life in the most abundant manner for all; because he would not that any thing should be wanting as far as he and his merits are concerned, so that all the wicked who perish may be without excuse. But he willed to die for the elect alone as touching the efficacy of his death, that is, he would not only sufficiently merit grace and life for them alone, but also effectually confers these upon them, grants faith, and the holy Spirit, and brings it to pass that they apply to themselves, by faith, the benefits of his death, and so obtain for themselves the efficacy of his merits.

In this sense it is correctly said that Christ died in a different manner for believers and unbelievers. Neither is this declaration attended with any difficulty or inconvenience, inasmuch as it harmonises not only with scripture, but also with experience; for both testify that the remedy of sin and

death is most sufficiently and abundantly offered in the gospel to all; but that it is effectually applied, and profitable only to them that believe. The Scriptures, also, everywhere, restrict the efficacy of redemption to certain persons only, as to Christ's sheep, to the elect, and such as believe, whilst on the other hand it clearly excludes from the grace of Christ the reprobate and unbelieving as long as they remain in their unbelief. "What concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" (2 Cor. 6: 15. See, also, Matt. 20: 28; 26: 28. Is. 53: 11. John 10: 15. Matt. 15: 24.)

Christ moreover, prayed only for the elect, including those who were already his disciples, and also such as would afterwards believe on his name. Hence he says, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." (John 17: 9.) If, therefore, Christ would not pray for the world, by which we are to understand such as do not believe, much less would he die for them, as far as the efficacy of his death is concerned; for it is less to pray, than to die for any one. There are also two inseparable parts of the sacrifice of Christ—intercession and death. And if he himself refuse to extend one part to the ungodly, who is he that will dare to give the other to them.

Lastly, the orthodox Fathers and Schoolmen, also distinguish and restrict the above passages of Scripture as we have done; especially Augustin, Cyril and Prosper. Lombard writes as follows: "*Christ offered himself to God, the Trinity for all men, as it respects the sufficiency of the price; but only for the elect as it regards the efficacy thereof, because he effected, and purchased salvation only for those who were predestinated.*" Thomas writes: "*The merit of Christ, as to its sufficiency, extends equally to all, but not as to its efficacy, which happens partly on account of free will, and partly on account of the election of God, through which the effects of the merits of Christ are mercifully bestowed upon some, and withheld from others according to the just judgment of God.*" Other Schoolmen, also, speak in the same manner, from which it is evident that Christ died for all in such a way, that the benefits of his death, nevertheless, pertain properly to such as believe, to whom alone they are also profitable and available.

Obj. 1. The promises of the gospel are universal, as appears from such declarations as invite all men to come to Christ, that they may have life. Hence it does not merely extend to such as believe. Ans. The promise is indeed universal in respect to such as repent and believe; but to extend it to the reprobate, would be blasphemy. "*There is,*" saith Ambrose, as just quoted, "*a certain special universality of the elect, and foreknown, discerned and distinguished from the entire generality.*" This restriction of the promises to such as believe, is proven from the plain and explicit form in which they are expressed. "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." "The righteousness of God, which is by the faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden." "Whosever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him." And from the words of Christ: "give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye pearls before swine," &c. (John 3: 16. Rom. 3: 22. Matt. 11: 28. Acts 2: 21. Heb. 5: 9. Matt. 7: 6.)

Obj. 2. Christ died for all. Therefore his death does not merely extend

to such as believe. Ans. Christ died for all as it regards the merit and efficacy of the ransom which he paid; but only for those that believe as it respects the application and efficacy of his death; for seeing that the death of Christ is applied to such alone, and is profitable to them, it is correctly said to belong properly to them alone, as has been already shown.

Question 41. Why was he also "buried?"

Answer. Thereby to prove that he was really dead.

EXPOSITION.

There are many causes on account of which Christ was buried:

1. He would be buried in confirmation of his death, that it might be manifest that he was truly dead; for not the living, but only the dead, are buried. Therefore, just as he presented himself after his resurrection to be seen, handled, &c., that there might be clear evidence that his body was raised from the dead, so after his death, he gave himself for the purpose of being felt and buried, that it might be known that he was a real corpse. There are some parts of the history of Christ's death that pertain to this, as that, when he was dead he was pierced with a spear, was taken down from the cross, was anointed, was wrapt in linen, &c.; for these also demonstrate the truth of his death. We are, therefore, by his burial, assured that he was really dead, and by this of our certain redemption; for our salvation consists in his death, the proof of which is his burial.

2. That the last part of his humiliation might be attained; for this (viz., burial) was a part of the punishment, curse, and ignominy which we had merited, as it is said, "Unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3: 19.) A dead body is, indeed, destitute of feeling and understanding, yet it was ignominious that his body should be laid in the earth as another corpse. Therefore, as the resurrection of Christ from the grave is a part of his glory, so his burial, and interment among the dead, by which he was placed in the same condition with them, is a part of the humiliation and ignominy which he rendered on our account; for he was not unwilling to become a corpse for our sake.

3. He would be buried that we might not be terrified in view of the grave, but might know that he has sanctified our graves by his own burial, so that they are no longer graves to us, but chambers and resting places in which we may quietly and peacefully repose until we are again raised to life.

4. He was buried that it might be apparent, in view of his resurrection, that he had truly overcome death in his own body, and that by his own power he had thrown it off from himself, so that his resurrection was no apparition or imaginary thing, but was a real resuscitation of a corpse reanimated.

5. That we may be confirmed in the hope of the resurrection, as we, after his example, shall also be buried, and shall be raised again by his power; knowing that Christ, our head, has opened up the way for us from the grave to glory.

6. That we being spiritually dead may rest from sin. "We are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6: 4.)

7. That the truth might correspond with the type of Jonah, and that the prophecies might be fulfilled in relation to the burial of the Messiah. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." "He made his grave with the wicked." (Ps. 16: 10. Is. 53: 9.)

Question 42. Since then Christ died for us, why must we also die?

Answer. Our death is not a satisfaction for our sins, but only an abolishing of sin, and a passage into eternal life.

EXPOSITION.

This answer is an explanation to the objection which we frequently hear made in the following form: He for whom another has died ought not himself to die, else God would seem to demand a double satisfaction for one offence. Christ now has died for us. Therefore, we ought not to die. Ans. It is conceded that we ought not to die for the sake of making satisfaction; but there are other causes why it becomes necessary for us to die. We do not die for the purpose of satisfying the justice of God, but that we may truly receive the benefits purchased by the death of another, that sin may be abolished, and a passage or transition be made unto eternal life. Our temporal death is then not a satisfaction for sin; but it is, 1. An admonition of the remains of sin in us. 2. An admonition of the greatness of the evil of sin. 3. An abolishing of the remains of sin; and, lastly, a passage into eternal life; for the transition of the faithful to eternal life is effected by temporal death. Reply. Where the cause is removed, the effect can no longer remain in force. But the cause of death in us, which is sin, is taken away. Therefore the effect, which is death, ought also to be taken away. Ans. The effect is, indeed, taken away when the cause is wholly removed; but in us the cause of death, which has respect to the abolishing of sin, is not entirely removed; although it be taken away as it respects the remission of sin. Or, we may reply, that sin, as far as it respects the guilt thereof, is taken away, but not as it respects the matter of sin which is not yet entirely abolished, but remains in us, to be removed gradually, that we may be required to exercise repentance, and be fervent in prayer, until, in the life to come, we be perfectly freed from all the remains of sin.

Question 43. What further benefit do we receive from the sacrifice and death of Christ on the cross?

Answer. That by virtue thereof our old man is crucified, dead, and buried with him; so that the corrupt inclinations of the flesh may no more reign in us, but that we may offer ourselves unto him a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

EXPOSITION.

This question has respect to the fruits or benefits of Christ's death. And here also, as in the passion of Christ, the end and fruits are to be regarded as the same, only in a different respect: for the things which Christ proposed to himself as ends, are unto us the fruits, when we receive or apply them to ourselves. It is, therefore, manifest that the benefits of Christ's death comprehend the entire work of our redemption, of which fruits we may specify the following:

1. *Justification, or the remission of sins.* The justice of God demands that the sinner should not be punished twice. And as he has punished our sins in Christ, he will not, therefore, punish the same in us. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," original as well as actual, and sins of commission as well as omission. We are, therefore, justified, that is, freed from the evil both of punishment and of guilt on account of the death of Christ, which is the cause of this effect.

2. *Regeneration, or the renewing of our nature by the Holy Spirit.* Christ, by his death, has merited for us not only the pardon of sin, but also its removal and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Or, we may say that he has, by his own death, obtained for us not only the remission of sin, but the indwelling of God in us. "If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you." "And ye are complete in him." "Who is made unto us righteousness and sanctification." (John 16: 7. Col. 2: 10. 1 Cor. 1: 30.)

But the death of Christ is, in two respects, the efficient cause, as well of our justification as of our regeneration. 1. *In respect to God:* because he, on account of the merit and death of Christ, remits unto us our sins, grants us the Holy Spirit, and renews in us his own image. "Being justified by his blood." "Being reconciled to God by the death of his Son." "Because ye are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Rom. 5: 9, 10. Gal. 4: 6.) 2. *In respect to us* the death of Christ is also an efficient cause; because we who believe that Christ obtained for us righteousness and the Holy Spirit, cannot be otherwise than grateful to him, and earnestly desire so to live that we may honor him, which is done by commencing to walk in newness of life. The application of the death of Christ, and a proper consideration of it, will not suffer us to remain ungrateful; but will constrain us to love Christ in return, and to render thanks for such a great and inestimable benefit. Hence we are not to imagine that we can have remission of sins without regeneration; for no one that is not regenerated can obtain remission of sins. He, therefore, who boasts of having applied to himself by faith the death of Christ, and yet has no desire to live a holy and godly life, that he may so honor the Saviour, lies, and gives conclusive evidence that the truth is not in him; for all those who are justified are willing and ready to do those things which are pleasing to God. The desire to obey God can never be separated from an application of the death of Christ, nor can the benefit of regeneration be experienced without that of justification. All those that are justified are also regenerated, and all those that are regenerated are justified.

Obj. The apostle Peter, in his first epistle, 1: 3, attributes our regeneration to the resurrection of Christ. In what manner, therefore, is it

here attributed to his death. Ans. It is attributed to both: to his death as it respects his merit; for by his death he has merited regeneration for us: and to his resurrection as it respects the application of it; for by rising from the dead he applies regeneration unto us, giving us the Holy Spirit.

3. Eternal life is another fruit of the death of Christ. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, (viz., to death) that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." (John 3: 16. 1 John 5: 11.)

What now is it *to believe in Christ, dead?* It is to believe that he has not only suffered the most excruciating pains and torments, but also death itself; and that by his death he has obtained for me remission of sins, reconciliation with God, and by consequence the Holy Spirit also, who commences in me a new life, that I may again be made the temple of God, and at length attain unto eternal life, in which God shall for ever be praised and magnified by me.

Question 44. Why is there added, "he descended into hell?"

Answer. That in my greatest temptations, I may be assured, and wholly comfort myself in this, that my Lord Jesus Christ, by his inexpressible anguish, pains, terrors, and hellish agonies, in which he was plunged during all his sufferings, but especially on the cross, hath delivered me from the anguish and torments of hell.

EXPOSITION.

There are two things which it is proper for us to consider in relation to this Article of the Creed. The first is: What is its meaning or sense? And the second, What is its use?

I. WHAT IS THE TRUE SENSE OF THIS ARTICLE OF THE CREED; OR, WHAT DOES THE DESCENT OF CHRIST INTO HELL SIGNIFY?

The term hell is used in the Scriptures in three different senses. 1. It is used for the grave. "Then ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave." "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." (Gen. 42: 38. Ps. 16: 10.) 2. It is employed to represent the place of the damned, as in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. "In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off." (Luke 16: 23.) 3. It is employed to signify the most extreme distress and anguish. "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me." "The Lord bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up," that is, he brings us into the most extreme pains, from which he afterwards again delivers us. (Ps. 116: 3. 1 Sam. 2: 6.)

In this Article the term hell is to be understood according to the third signification. That it cannot be taken in the sense of the grave is evident; 1. Because it is already declared in the Creed, *he was buried.* If any one affirms that this last article is explanatory of the one that precedes, he will affirm nothing thereby; because, whenever two declarations, expressing the same thing, are joined together, in order that the one may explain

the other, it is proper that the last be clearer and more easily understood than the former. But here it is just the reverse; for to descend into hell is much more obscure than to be buried. 2. It is not probable, in such a brief and concise Confession as the Creed, that the same article would be expressed twice, or that the same thing would be reiterated in other words. Again, when it is said that Christ descended into hell, it cannot mean the place of the damned, which is the second signification of the term as above considered; as is proven from this division: The Divinity did not descend, because this is, and was everywhere: neither did his body, because it rested in the grave three days, according to the type of Jonah; nor did it arise from any other place than the grave.

Neither did the soul of Christ descend:

1. Because the Scriptures in no place affirm this.

2. Because Christ said in relation to this when dying upon the cross, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit;" and to the malefactor, he said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23: 46, 43.) The soul of Christ, after his death, was, therefore, in the hands of his Father in Paradise, and not in hell. Neither has the sophism any force, which affirms that he was also in the hands of his Father in hell, according to the declaration of the Psalmist, "If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there;" (Ps. 139: 8.) that is, he was there also the object of the divine regard, and was defended that he should not perish: for it is first said, "Into thy hands," &c., that it might next be declared, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." But the felicity, and deliverance here spoken of is not found in hell. The meaning is, both of us, who now suffer will this day be in Paradise, in the place of eternal salvation and blessedness, free from all these tortures. But Paradise is neither hell, nor is it in hell, which is the place of torment. Hence it is evident that Christ spoke this to the malefactor, not of his Divinity, but of his soul, which suffered with his body; for his Divinity was now with the thief; neither did he suffer, nor was he delivered according to his Divinity, but according to his soul.

3. If Christ descended into hell, (as to his soul) he descended either that he might there suffer something, or that he might deliver the fathers from that place, as the Papists affirm. But he did not descend for the purpose of suffering any thing, because when hanging upon the cross he said, "It is finished." (John 19: 30.) Neither did he descend to liberate the fathers: 1. Because he did this by suffering for them on earth. 2. He accomplished the same by the power, and efficacy of his Godhead from the very beginning of the world, and not by any local descent of his body, or soul into hell. 3. The fathers were not in hell; therefore they could not be liberated from that place. The souls of the just are in the hands of God, neither do they suffer any pain. "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence." (Luke 16: 26.) And Lazarus having died was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom, and not into Limbus Patrum.

There are some who believe that the soul of Christ descended into hell after his death, not to suffer, nor to liberate the fathers, but that he might there make an open display of his victory, and strike terror into the minds

of the devils. But the Scriptures no where affirm that Christ descended into hell for such a purpose as this.

Those who hold this view of the subject, and who object to what we have here said in regard to the descent of Christ into hell, bring forward the passage in 1 Peter 3: 19, as though it were in opposition to the view which we have presented; "By which also he went, and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient," &c. But the meaning of this passage is different from what these persons suppose: for the Apostle says, *Christ went*, that is, he was sent of the Father to the Church from the very beginning; *by his Spirit*, that is by his Divinity; *to the spirits which are now in prison*, that is in hell; *he preached in time past*, when he hitherto existed, and they *were disobedient*, viz, before the flood: for then, when they were disobedient, he preached to them being in this condition. But it was in the time of Noah that they were disobedient. Therefore, it was then that Christ preached by the fathers, inviting the disobedient to repentance. And still further, although Peter speaks of the descent of Christ into hell, yet this is not the meaning of those whom we here oppose, but of the Papists who insist that Christ preached to the fathers in hell, and delivered them.

They also object by bringing forward another passage from the same Apostle, who, in another place, says that "the gospel was preached also to them that are dead." (1 Pet. 4: 6.) But to understand this passage as they do, is to lose sight of the figure of speech that is employed; for the gospel was preached to the dead, that is, to those who are now dead, or who were dead when Peter wrote this passage, but who were living at the time when it was preached to them.

Another passage found in the epistle of Paul to the Eph. 4: 9, is also wrested from its proper signification by those who hold the above view; where it is said, "that Christ descended into the lower parts of the earth," which they understand to mean hell. But this is also to disregard the figure of speech that is here used; for the sense of the phrase is, *he descended into the lower parts of the earth*, that is, into the earth, which is the lowest part of the world; because there is here not an opposition of one part of the earth to another, but of the earth to heaven, by which the humiliation of Christ is signified. This is apparent from the object, and scope of the Apostle, because he here makes a contrast between the highest glory, and the deepest humiliation of Christ. So Christ ascended into the highest parts of heaven, that is, in heaven, which is the highest part of the world.

These passages, therefore, establish nothing in relation to the descent of the soul of Christ into hell, and if they did afford the strongest proof of it, yet still, as we have already said, the testimony which they furnish would not be in favor of those to whom we here refer, but in favor of the Papists who teach that Christ preached in hell, and liberated the fathers. And if the proofs gathered from these passages cannot remove the difficulties which encumber the views of the Papists in relation to this subject, much less can they be of any assistance to these persons; for it is certain that it cannot be proven from them, that Christ descended into hell for the purpose of striking terror into death and the devil. Yet this view, or opinion, of Christ's descent into hell, has nothing of impiety in it, and has been approved of and held by many of the fathers. Hence it is not proper that

we should contend strenuously with any one in regard to it. Yet it is certain, notwithstanding, that it cannot be gathered from the Scriptures, nor established conclusively by solid arguments; whilst reasons to the contrary are at hand. For after his death, when he had said it is finished, the soul of Christ rested in the hands of his Father, to whom he had commended it. And if he descended into hell for the purpose of triumphing over his enemies, this article should be the commencement of his glorification. But it is not likely that the glorification of Christ would take its beginning in hell; for all the preceding articles of the Creed speak of the degrees of the humiliation of Christ, of which the lowest and most extreme is his descent into hell, which is also apparent from the antithesis. Hence we are opposed to this view of the subject. Yet, in the mean time, we confess that Christ struck a great terror and dread in the devils. But this he did by his death, by which he vanquished the devil, sin, and death, and without doubt the devil saw that he was entirely disarmed, and conquered by the death of Christ.

What, therefore, does this descent of Christ into hell signify? 1. It signifies those extreme torments, pains, and anguish, which Christ suffered in his soul, such as the damned experience, partly in this, and partly in the life to come. 2. It embraces also the greatest and most extreme ignominy, which Christ suffered during the whole period of his passion. That these things are signified, and comprehended in the descent of Christ into hell, the testimonies of Scripture which we have already cited in this discussion sufficiently teach and affirm. "The pains of hell gat hold upon me." "The Lord bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up." (Ps. 116: 3. 1 Sam. 2: 6.)

That Christ ought to have suffered, and that he did endure these things is also proven by this same testimony of David: "The pains of hell gat hold upon me," which is spoken of Christ in the person of David. There are also other portions of Scripture which bear similar testimony, as "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." "My soul is sorrowful even to death." (Is. 53: 10. Matt. 26: 28.) The sorrows and pains which he endured in the garden, when he sweat drops of blood, also demonstrate the same thing: because "the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all." (Is. 53: 6.) And still more he cried out upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me." (Matt. 27: 46.) The same thing is proven by these arguments:

1. Christ was to redeem not only our bodies, but also our souls. Therefore it behooved him to suffer not only in body, but also in soul.

2. It was necessary for Christ to deliver us from the anguish and pains of hell. Therefore it became him to experience these. And this he did either before or after his death. That it was not after his death, the Papists themselves confess. Therefore it was before his death. Neither was it in his body that he endured these things; for the sufferings of his body were only external. Therefore he suffered them in his soul.

3. It is proper that the severe torments and anguish of soul, (which were the heaviest part of his sufferings) should not be unnoticed in the Creed. But they would not be mentioned if this article of the descent of Christ into hell did not refer to them; for the preceding articles speak only of the external sufferings of the body, which Christ suffered from without. There is, therefore, no doubt but that the sufferings of his soul are more particularly signified by this article.

This is the true descent of Christ into hell. Therefore we are to hold and defend in opposition to the Papists, that which is certain, viz, that Christ descended into hell in the manner, and sense in which we have here explained. Should any one, however, be able to defend, and establish the fact that he descended in a different sense, it is well. As for me, I cannot.

Obj. 1. The articles of the Creed ought to be understood in their proper and natural sense, and without admitting any figure. Ans. This is true if the articles, when taken in their proper signification, do not conflict with other portions of Scripture. But this article of Christ's descent into hell when thus interpreted, is, in many ways, opposed to the declaration of Jesus upon the cross, *it is finished;* for if he finished, and consummated every part of our redemption upon the cross, then there was no cause left why he should descend into hell, the place of the damned.

Obj. 2. The torments and horrors of soul which Christ experienced preceded his burial. But his descent into hell follows it. Therefore it cannot refer to, and designate the anguish of soul which Christ endured. Ans. There is here a fallacy in the minor proposition, in making that a cause which is not designed as such; for the descent into hell in the Creed follows the burial of Christ, not because it was accomplished after his burial; but because it is an explanation of what precedes concerning his passion, death and burial, lest something should be detracted from these; as if it said, he did not only suffer in body—he did not only die a bodily death and was not only buried; but he also suffered in soul the most extreme torments, and hellish agonies such as all the ungodly shall forever endure. The chief, and heaviest part of the sufferings of Christ is, therefore, correctly placed last, according to the order in the Creed; for it proceeds from the pains of the body to those of the soul, and from the sufferings which are visible to those that are invisible, as it were from the lighter to the heavier.

II. What are the fruits of Christ's descent into hell?

Christ descended into hell: 1. That we might not descend thither, and that he might deliver us from the eternal anguish and torments of hell. 2. That he might carry us with himself to heaven.

Therefore to believe in Christ, who descended into hell, is to believe that he sustained for us, in his own soul, hellish agonies and pains, and that extreme ignominy which awaits the ungodly in hell, that we might never descend thither, nor be compelled to suffer the pains and torments, which all the devils and reprobate will for ever suffer in hell; but that on the contrary, we might rather ascend with him to heaven, and there with him enjoy the greatest felicity and glory to all eternity. This is the fruit, and benefit of this article of Christ's descent into hell.

SEVENTEENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 45. What doth the resurrection of Christ profit us?

Answer. First: by his resurrection he hath overcome death, that he might make us partakers of that righteousness which he had purchased for us by his death. Secondly, we are also by his power raised up to a new life. And lastly, the resurrection of Christ is a sure pledge of our blessed resurrection.

EXPOSITION.

We have thus far spoken of the humiliation of Christ which reached its last point in the article of his descent into hell. We must now speak of his glorification, which began with his resurrection from the dead on the third day. The humiliation of the mediator was not to continue for ever. It was sufficient that he should once suffer, and die. But the efficacy and power of Christ, in preserving the blessings which flow from his humiliation, will endure for ever.

There are two things which particularly claim our attention in treating upon the article of the resurrection of Christ—its history and benefits. In considering the *history* of the resurrection of Christ it becomes us to enquire, 1. *Who was it* that rose from the dead? It was Christ, the God-man, who rose in the same body in which he died. This the Word never laid aside. 2. *In what manner* did he rise? He, who was truly dead, revived, recalling his soul to his body, and came forth gloriously from the sepulchre in which his body was laid on the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that by his Father's, as well as by his own peculiar strength and power, we mean, the power not of his humanity, but of his Divinity. For he was raised by the Father through himself; inasmuch as the Father works through the Son. 3. *What are the evidences* of his resurrection? The evidences of the resurrection of Christ are such as these: that he showed himself openly to many women and disciples; that the angel testified to it, &c. The *benefits* of the resurrection of Christ are enumerated in the Question of the Catechism now under consideration, which we must explain more fully; and in doing this, the following questions claim our particular attention:

I. *Did Christ rise from the dead?*
II. *How did he rise?*
III. *For what purpose did he rise?*
IV. *What are the benefits, or fruits of his resurrection?*

I. Did Christ rise from the dead?

Infidels believe that Christ died, but do not believe that he rose from the dead. That Christ, however, did rise from the dead is proven by the testimony of angels, women, evangelists, apostles, and other saints, who saw him, felt him, and conversed with him after his resurrection. And even if the Apostles had not seen Christ after his resurrection, we ought still to believe them on account of their divine authority.

II. How did Christ rise?

The following circumstances explain the manner of the resurrection of Christ:

1. Christ did truly rise, that is, his soul did truly return to his body, from which it was separated by death, and he did truly come forth from the sepulchre in which his body was laid, notwithstanding the vigilance of the guards; yea, he even struck them with amazement and wonder.

2. He rose the same person, the same Jesus Christ, very God and very man, which had died; he rose according to the nature in which he had suffered, which was his human nature, his true human nature, the very same which it was in essence and properties, not deified, but glorified, having laid aside all the infirmities to which it was subject. "Behold my hands and my feet, it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." (Luke 24: 39.) And truly nothing different from that which had died, could rise again. The very same body, therefore, which had fallen a victim to death rose again; and it is this which affords us such great comfort. For it was necessary that he should be one, and the same mediator, who would merit for us those blessings which we had lost by sin, and who would restore them unto us, by applying them to each one singly. Yea, had not the flesh of Christ risen, ours could not rise.

3. He rose by his own power, that is, he vanquished death, throwing it from himself, quickened his dead body, reunited it with his soul, and restored to himself a blessed, heavenly, and glorious life, and that by his own divine virtue and power. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." (John 2: 19; 10: 18; 5: 21.)

Obj. But Christ was raised by the Father; for it is said, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you," &c. (Rom. 8: 11.) Therefore Christ did not raise himself. Ans. The Father raised the Son through the Son himself, not as through an instrument, but as through another person of the same essence with himself, and of infinite power, through whom the Father ordinarily works. The Son was raised by the Father through himself; he himself raised himself by his Spirit. "For what things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."

4. He rose on the third day in the manner just described: 1. Because the Scriptures which contain all the predictions and types relating to the Messiah, declare that he would rise on the third day; as the type of Jonah, &c. 2. Because it was proper that his body should rise free from corruption; and yet not so soon after his death as to leave any doubt that he was truly dead. It is for this reason that he rose on the third day, and not on the first. The circumstance of his rising on the third day is, therefore, added in the Creed that the truth might correspond with the type, and that we might know that Jesus is the Messiah promised to the fathers, because he rose from the dead on the third day.

III. For what purpose did Christ rise?

Christ rose: 1. For his own glory and for that of his Father. "Declared to be the Son of God, by the resurrection from the dead." "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." (Rom. 1: 4. John 17: 1.) The glory of the Son is the glory of the Father.

2. On account of the prophecies which had been uttered in relation to the death, and resurrection of Christ. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thy holy One to see corruption." "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed; he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." "No sign shall be given to it, but the sign of the prophet, Jonas; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." "For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." (Ps. 16: 10. Acts 2: 27. Is. 53: 10, 11. Matt. 12: 39. John 20: 9.) In view now of these and other prophecies, it was necessary that Christ should die, and rise again, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled: "How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be;" (Matt. 26: 54,) viz, on account of the unchangeable decree of God which he has revealed in the Scriptures, of which it is said in the Acts of the Apostles, 4: 27, 28, "Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together; for to do whatsoever thy hand, and thy counsel determined before to be done." The predictions which Christ uttered in relation to his death and resurrection, may also be here appropriately cited. "And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again." "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (Matt. 17: 23. John 2: 19.)

3. On account of the dignity, and power of the person that rose. It was in view of this, that the Apostle Peter declares that it was not possible that Christ should be held under the power of death: 1. Because he was the beloved, and only begotton Son of God. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands." "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." (John 3: 35, 16.) 2. Because Christ is true God, the author and fountain of life. "I am the Resurrection, and the Life." "The Father hath given to the Son to have life in himself." "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." "I give unto them eternal life." (John 11: 25; 5: 21, 26; 10: 28.) If Christ now was to give life to men it is absurd to suppose that he should remain under the power of death and not rise. 3. Christ was in himself a righteous man, and has by his death satisfied for our sins which were imputed unto him. But where there is no sin, there death does not any longer reign. "For by one offering, he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." (Heb. 10: 14. Rom. 6: 10.)

4. Christ arose that he might carry on the office of mediator, which he could not have done had he remained under death. 1. It became the mediator, who was true God and man, to reign eternally. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre." "I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his

Father, and he shall be my Son." "Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever, as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." "They shall be my people, and I will be their God; and David, my servant, shall be king over them forever." "And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." "And of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Ps. 45 : 6. 2 Sam. 7 : 13, 14. Ps. 89 : 36, 37, 38. Ez. 37 : 23. Dan. 7 : 27. Is. 9 : 7. Luke 1 : 33.) It was necessary, therefore, that the human nature which was made of the seed of David should rise from the dead and reign. 2. It was necessary that the mediator, who is our brother and very man, should continually make intercessions for us, and appear before God in our behalf as an everlasting priest. "Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek." "It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Ps. 110 : 4. Rom. 8 : 34.) 3. It behooved the mediator, who is true man, to be mediator both by merit and efficacy. It was not sufficient for him merely to die. It became him also, by his power, to confer upon the church, and upon all of us, the benefits which he had purchased for us by his death. These benefits are righteousness, the Holy Spirit and eternal life and glory. For it belonged to the office of the mediator both to merit and to confer these blessings. But if he had remained under the power of death, and had not risen from the dead, he could not have conferred these gifts upon us, because then he would have had no existence, and hence could have effected nothing in our behalf. It is for this reason also, that these blessings are deposited in Christ by the Godhead, that he should make us partakers of them: "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." (John 1 : 16.) Nor can it seem strange that Christ should bestow upon us the same blessings which he has, by his death, obtained from the Godhead for us: for a man may obtain a certain thing from some one, and may also confer it upon another. A certain one, for instance, may intercede in behalf of another, with a Prince, for a gift of a thousand crowns. The Prince may grant the request for the sake of him who intercedes, and may also confer the gift upon him that he may bestow it upon him for whom intercession has been made. In this case he obtains the gift from the Prince and confers it at the same time. So it is in relation to Christ — although he could have conferred his benefits upon us by the power of his Godhead, through which he regenerates and justifies us; yet as God has decreed to raise the dead by man, (for by man came also the resurrection of the dead) and to judge the world by man, so he also determined to bestow these same gifts by the man Jesus, that he might be and continue mediator, very God and very man. It was on this account also necessary that Christ should for ever remain our brother, and our Head; and that we, on the other hand, being engrafted into him by a true faith, might always continue his members. "Abide in me and I in you." (John 5 : 4.) Our salvation has its foundation in the seed of David, as it is said, "My servant David shall feed them for ever." (Ez. 34 : 23.) But if his human nature had remained under the power

of death, he would neither have been our brother, nor would we have been his members. Obj. But Christ, under the Old Testament, before his incarnation, conferred without his human nature upon the fathers the very same blessings which he now under the New Testament bestows upon us; and was mediator no less before he assumed our nature, than he is now since he has taken it upon himself. Therefore it was not necessary that Christ should, for this cause, become man and die. Ans. But it would not have been possible for Christ to have done the things which he did under the Old Testament unless he had subsequently become man, and unless he would also remain such for ever. Nor could he now do these things if he had not risen from the dead, or if he would not for ever retain our nature which he has assumed. "The Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." (John 5: 27.)

5. Christ rose for our salvation, and that in three respects: 1. *For our justification.* "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4: 25.) The resurrection of the mediator was necessary for our justification, first, because his satisfaction would not have been perfect without it, nor would the punishment which he endured in that case have been finite. And without such a satisfaction and punishment it was not possible that we could have been freed from everlasting death, from which it became the mediator to deliver us in such a manner as to overcome it entirely in us. But in order that he might vanquish death in us it was necessary that he should first overcome it in himself, and so fulfill that which had been predicted: "Death is swallowed up in victory." "O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory." (Hos. 16: 14. 1 Cor. 15: 55.) By so doing he confounded his enemies who had reviled him when hanging upon the cross, saying, "He saved others, himself he cannot save." (Matt. 27: 42.) And still further: if he had not conquered death, he could not have bestowed upon us the benefits which he had merited for us by his death. It belonged to the office of mediator as we have already shown, both to merit and bestow benefits. Yea, had he not risen from the dead, we could not have known that he had satisfied for us; for this would have been a certain argument that he had not made this satisfaction, but was overcome by death and the burden of sin; because where death is there is sin; or, if he had made satisfaction for us, and yet remained under the power of death, it would have been inconsistent with the justice of God. Hence it was necessary that Christ should rise again, as well that he might make satisfaction for us, as that we might also know that he has fully accomplished this, and merited benefits for us; and finally, that he himself might be able to apply these benefits unto us, or what is the same thing, that we might be perfectly justified and saved by his merits and efficacy. 2. *Christ rose for our regeneration.* Justification or the remission of sin is not sufficient without regeneration, and a new life. 3. Christ rose for the preservation of the benefits which he had purchased for us by his death, and that he might *secure our resurrection and glorification.* It is in this way that God has purposed eternally to quicken and glorify us, that being inserted into the body or humanity of his Son we may be perpetually borne by it, and draw our life from it. "By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." (1 Cor. 15: 21.) It was for these reasons necessary that Christ should rise again, that is, that his soul, which was separated from his body by death, should again be

united therewith; for the resurrection is nothing else than a re-union of the same body with the same soul.

IV. What are the fruits or benefits of the resurrection of Christ?

The questions, *for what purpose did Christ rise*, and *what are the fruits of his resurrection*, are different. For not all the causes of his resurrection are fruits thereof. The causes of his resurrection too, are considered in one way and the fruits thereof in another. And besides, the benefits which Christ has secured for us by his resurrection are the causes of it in as far as it was necessary, in order that he might confer these gifts by the power of his resurrection.

The fruits of the resurrection of Christ are, moreover, two-fold, having respect both to Christ and to us.

As it respects Christ, he was, by his resurrection from the dead, declared to be the Son of God, the only begotten and natural Son of God, who is also himself God. (Rom. 1 : 4.) For he revived by his own power, which is peculiar to God alone. "In him was life." "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." (John 1 : 4 ; 5 : 26.) And still further, the human nature of Christ, by his resurrection, was adorned with heavenly gifts, with immortality, and with that glory which becomes the nature of the Son of God. "That ye may know what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the church." (Eph. 1 : 18–23.)

The fruits of the resurrection of Christ, which have respect to us, are various. Speaking in a general way, it may be said that all the benefits of Christ's death are also fruits of his resurrection; for his resurrection secures the effect which his death was designed to have. Christ by his resurrection applies to us the benefits which he has merited for us. In this way the benefits of his death and resurrection are the same, unless it be that they have been merited for us by his death differently from what they are conferred upon us by his resurrection. It was not necessary that the act of meriting should continue through the entire period of both the old and new church. But it was different with the act of bestowing and applying these benefits. This was to continue for ever. And hence it was necessary also that the mediator should exist in every period of the church, that he might always confer the blessings which he was once to merit, and which it was not possible to confer without a mediator. As it respects the church which existed before the incarnation of Christ, the mediator bestowed the benefits of his death which had not yet taken place, by the power and efficacy of his resurrection yet to come; but now he confers these benefits upon us by the power of his resurrection as having already taken place.

It now remains for us to specify particularly the principal fruits which the resurrection of Christ secures unto us.

1. The resurrection of Christ bears testimony *to his merit*, that he has

perfectly satisfied for our sins. One single sin unatoned for, would have kept him under the power of death; for he was cast into such a prison as to make it entirely impossible for him ever to have escaped thence, except by paying the very last farthing. But he did come out of this prison. Therefore he must have paid the uttermost farthing. In view now of this his merit we have remission of sins, and are justified before God. The resurrection of Christ also assures us as to *the application of his benefits*, which he could not have conferred had he not risen from the dead; for, as we have already shown, it became the same mediator, being man, both to merit and bestow gifts, and for this reason to rise from the dead. In as much, therefore, as he has risen, we are assured that he has not only merited, but is also able to bestow upon us the benefits of his death; for, says the Apostle Paul, "Christ was raised again for our justification," that is, to confer and apply unto us his righteousness. (Rom. 4: 25.)

2. Another benefit resulting to us from the resurrection of Christ, *is the gift of the Holy Spirit*, through whom Christ regenerates us and raises us up unto eternal life. It behooved him first to throw off death from himself, and then from us; and it is necessary for us to be united to him as our Head, that the Holy Ghost may thus pass over from him into us. Hence he now obtains and grants unto us, since his resurrection from the dead, the Holy Ghost, and through him unites us to himself, regenerates and quickens us. It is true indeed that the godly also in the church of old were endowed with, and regenerated by the Holy Ghost; yet the influences of the Spirit were not then enjoyed to the extent to which they now are under the New Testament, and that by the power of his resurrection which was then still to come. The Holy Ghost, by whose virtue alone we are regenerated, could not be given without the resurrection and ascension of Christ into heaven. Hence it is said, "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (John 7: 39.)

3. *The resurrection of our bodies* is another fruit of the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection of Christ is a pledge of ours, 1. Because he is our Head, and we are his members. Much of his glory as our Head depends upon, and results from the glory and dignity of his members. It is true indeed that Christ would exist and would be glorious in and by himself, even though his members were to remain under the power of death, yet he would not be a head, or king, &c., in as much as no one can be a head without members, nor a king without a kingdom. Christ therefore is head only in respect to his members. 2. If Christ be risen, he has abolished sin; not, however, his own sin, for he was free from all manner of sin; but he has abolished sin as it respects us. And if he has abolished our sin, he has also abolished death; for in removing the cause he has, at the same time, removed the effect. "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6: 23.) And further, if he has abolished death, and that by a sufficient satisfaction for our sins, as his resurrection fully testifies, then his resurrection is most assuredly a certain evidence and pledge of our resurrection, in as much as it is impossible that we should continue in death since Christ has rendered a full and sufficient satisfaction in our behalf. 3. As the first Adam received benefits for himself and all his posterity, and lost these same benefits for all his posterity; so Christ, the second Adam, received life and glory for himself and us; and will, therefore, also communicate this life and all his other gifts to us. 4. That the resurrection of Christ is a pledge of our

resurrection, may also be inferred from the fact that the same Spirit dwells in us which dwelt in Christ, and will also work the same in us which he wrought in Christ our head. The Spirit is always the same in whomsoever he dwells. He does not work effectually in the head, and sleep in the members. Seeing, therefore, that Christ raised himself from the dead by his Spirit, he will also without doubt raise us. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8: 11.) 5. Christ is our brother and will not, therefore, on account of his tender love and affection, leave us under the power of death, especially if we take into consideration his power and glory. For if he raised himself when dead, much more will he be able to raise us, in as much as he is now alive. And if he had power to raise himself from the dead when existing in a state of humiliation, much more can he now raise us, seeing that he reigns gloriously at the right hand of the Father. There are, however, besides these three, other fruits which the resurrection of Christ secures unto us, such as the following:

4. The resurrection of Christ confirms his claims to the Messiahship inasmuch as there is in his resurrection a most complete, and exact fulfilment of various prophecies.

5. We are assured by the resurrection of Christ, that he now performs the different parts of the office of mediator, that he applies unto us the benefit of redemption, that he constantly preserves us in the righteousness which he has made over unto us, that he commences a new life in us, and thus confirms us as to the consummation of eternal life, which he could not do, had he not risen from the dead.

6. Seeing that Christ now lives, and reigns for ever, we may be certain that he will preserve, and defend his Church.

7. The last, though not the least, benefit resulting from the resurrection of Christ, is the consummation of all his benefits, and the glorification of the Church. It was for this reason that Christ died, rose again, and has delivered us perfectly from sin, that he might make us heirs with him in his kingdom and glory. "He is the First-born from the dead." "Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." (Col. 1: 18. Rom. 8: 17.) He shall conform us to himself, because both he and we live by the same Spirit. And this Spirit is not unlike himself. For "if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised," &c. "I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." (Rom. 8: 11. John 14: 3.)

The sum of what we have now said as touching the fruits of the resurrection of Christ is this, that seeing he has risen from the dead, it is evident that he is declared to be the Son of God, and that his humanity is endowed with that glory which becomes the nature of the Son of God; and also that he bestows upon us his righteousness, regenerates us by the influence of his Spirit, and will perfect the new life which he has begun in us, and make us partakers with himself in his glory, felicity and everlasting life.

Obj. 1. The resurrection of Christ, according to what has been said, can neither be an argument in favor of the resurrection of the wicked, nor the cause of it, inasmuch as they are not members of Christ. Therefore the wicked will not rise. Ans. The wicked will not rise on account of the resurrec-

tion of Christ, but for other causes, viz: on account of the just judgment of God, for which they will be raised from the dead, that they may be eternally punished. For there may be in regard to the same thing many effects, and different causes.

Obj. 2. But the things which have been specified, are the benefits of his death, and cannot, therefore, be regarded as the fruits of his resurrection. Ans. They are benefits of his death in as far as he has merited them by his death; and they are the fruits of his resurrection by *the manifestation* which he thus made of them; for he declared by his resurrection that he had purchased these gifts for us. By his coming forth from the punishment under which he was laid, he declared that he had fully satisfied for our sins. And they are still further the fruits of his resurrection by *the application* which he makes of them, having risen. He being rich was made poor, and being poor was made rich again, that we might become rich. (2 Cor. 8: 9.)

Obj. 3. The cause is before the effect. But the cause of these benefits which is here said to be the resurrection of Christ, was not before the justification of the fathers, and the resurrection of the saints under the Old Testament. Therefore the effect, which comprehends these benefits, cannot be sooner than the cause itself. Ans. We deny the minor proposition; for whilst the cause did not exist as to its completion, yet it did exist in the counsel of God, and as it respects its efficacy and virtue, even under the Old Testament dispensation: because even then the fathers were received into divine favor, and enjoyed, to a certain extent, the influence of the Holy Spirit and other gifts, for and through the mediator, who was to come into the world, humble himself, and be glorified.

What then is the meaning of this article of the Creed: *I believe in Christ, who rose from the dead on the third day?* It means that I believe: 1. That Christ did truly recall his soul to his body which was dead, and quickened it. 2. That he retained a true soul and body; and that both are now glorified, and free from all infirmity. 3. That he rose by his own divine virtue and power. 4. That he rose for the purpose of making us partakers of the righteousness, holiness, and glorification, which he had purchased for us.

EIGHTEENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 46. How dost thou understand these words, "he ascended into heaven?"

Answer. That Christ, in sight of his disciples, was taken up from the earth into heaven; and that he continues there for our interest, until he come again to judge the quick and the dead.

EXPOSITION.

The ascension of Christ into heaven is a visible, local and real translation of his body and soul from earth into that heaven, which is above all

visible heavens at the right hand of God, in that light which is inaccessible, where he now is, and remains, and from which he will come to judgment. In this, as in the article of the resurrection of Christ, there are two things which chiefly claim our attention—its history and fruits.

In speaking of the history of the ascension of Christ, the following things are to be considered: 1. *Who ascended?* The very same person that suffered, and rose again. 2. *According to what did he ascend?* According to his human nature. 3. *Whither did he ascend?* Up into heaven, above these visible heavens. 4. *By what help, or means?* By the peculiar power of his Godhead. 5. *For what purpose did he ascend?* That he might be our Head, and High-Priest in heaven. 6. *How did he ascend?* Visibly, and whilst his disciples were beholding him, by a true, and local elevation or gradual ascent of his body from earth into heaven. 7. *When did he ascend?* The fortieth day after his resurrection. 8. *From what place did he ascend?* From Bethany, at the mount of Olives. We shall speak of *the fruits* of his ascension when we treat upon the forty-ninth Question of the Catechism.

All the questions which we have here proposed in relation to the ascension of Christ, may be reduced to the following:

I. *Whither did Christ ascend?*
II. *In what manner?*
III. *For what purpose?*
IV. *In what does the ascension of Christ differ from ours?*
V. *What are the fruits of his ascension?*

I. Whither did Christ ascend?

After Christ had given many infallible proofs to his apostles of his resurrection from the dead, and of his true humanity, he ascended into heaven, in the sight of his disciples, on the fortieth day after his resurrection, when he was with them in Bethany. The term *heaven* has, as it is used in the Scriptures, three significations. It means, *first*, the air. "Behold the fowls of the heaven." (Matt. 6: 26.) *Secondly*, it signifies the etherial region beyond, including the celestial spheres. "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon, and the stars," &c. "He ascended up far above all heavens," that is, these visible heavens. (Ps. 8: 3. Eph. 4: 10.) *Thirdly*, it means the place of the blessed, which is that immense, bright, clear, and glorious space which is without and above this world, and these visible heavens, the abode of God and of the blessed, in which God manifests himself immediately and gloriously to all eternity, and communicates himself to the blessed angels and men, and where the seat of our blessedness is prepared with Christ, and holy spirits. It is in this heavon that God is said to dwell; not that he is contained, or circumscribed in any place, but because it is there that he especially manifests, and communicates his glory to the blessed angels and men. It is called in Scripture the new world, the new heaven, the heavenly Jerusalem, Paradise, Abraham's bosom, &c. This heaven is not every where, but above, and separate from earth, and hell. "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence." "The

heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool." (Luke 16: 26. Is. 66: 1.) It was in this heaven that Elijah was taken. From this the Holy Ghost came on the day of Penticost. Paul calls it the third heaven. It is in this third signification that we are to understand it, when used to express the place to which Christ ascended.

Christ ascended, therefore, in that heaven which is the abode of the blessed. This is established by many and express testimonies from the word of God, such as the devil himself will never, to all eternity, be able to pervert. "While they beheld he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." "In my Father's house there are many mansions;" (that is, many houses in which we may dwell and abide) "I go to prepare a place for you." "He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." "He was received up into heaven." "Stephen saw the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God;" that is, he saw with his bodily eyes, to which was divinely given a new sight or vision, beyond and through all the visible heavens, Christ in the same human nature in which he had humbled himself and appeared in the form of a servant. "Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." "He ascended far above all heavens." "We have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens." "Made higher than the heavens." "Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." "Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus." (Acts 1: 9, 10, 11. John 14: 2. Luke 24: 51. Mark 16: 19. Acts 7: 56. Col. 3: 1. Eph. 4: 10. Heb. 4: 14; 7: 26; 9: 24. Phil. 3: 20.) Obj. But our conversation, to which reference is made in the last passage quoted, is on earth. Therefore heaven is on earth. Ans. Our conversation is in heaven, first in the hope and certainty which we have of it; and secondly in the beginning we have of that heavenly life.

In this heaven, therefore, which is the abode of God, and of the blessed, Christ ascended, and is now there, and will come from thence to judge the world according to the testimony of the word of God.

God will have us know to what place Christ has ascended, 1. That it may be manifest that he continues true man, and did not vanish away, but remains and will for ever remain very man in heaven. 2. That we may know to what place our thoughts should be directed, and where we ought to come in our approaches to him, so as to avoid all forms of idolatry. 3. That we may know our home, or the house into which Christ will bring us, and in which we shall dwell with him.

II. In what manner did Christ ascend into heaven?

Christ ascended into heaven,

1. According to his human nature. "But me ye have not always." (Matt. 26: 11.) Obj. He who is always in heaven did not ascend thither. The Son of man was in heaven. Therefore he did not ascend thither. Ans. We grant that he who is always in heaven did not ascend thither according to

his divine nature, for this was already in heaven before his ascension. As when Christ was on earth, his divine nature did not, for this reason, leave heaven, so when he is now in heaven, his Divinity does not, for this reason, depart from us. Cyprian says, "*The Lord ascended into heaven, not where the Word of God had not been before, because he was always in heaven, and remained in the Father; but where the Word made flesh did not sit before.*" To this it is objected: That which descended also ascended. His Divinity descended. Therefore it also ascended. Ans. The form of speech which is here used is not to be understood in its proper sense; for when his Divinity is said to have descended, it means that it manifested itself locally, where before it had not manifested itself.

2. He ascended locally and bodily, that is, he did truly pass from one place to another. He removed his human nature from a lower place to one that is higher, even in heaven, by a transfer or change that was real and proper; which it would not have been possible for him to have done, if he had been everywhere in body. That Christ did indeed ascend locally, is proven by these declarations of Scripture: "But me ye have not always with you." "If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you." "I leave the world and go unto the Father." "What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before." "Seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." "Until the day in which he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." (John 12: 8; 16: 7; 16: 28; 5: 62. Col. 3: 1. Acts 1: 2, 9.)

3. Christ ascended into heaven visibly; for the ascent of his body into heaven was apparent to the sight of his disciples, who were witnesses of it. "While they beheld, he was taken up." (Acts 1: 9.) He was taken up until they could no longer see him. They beheld him ascending until a cloud received him out of their sight.

4. He ascended by his own power, that is to say, of his Godhead, by which he also rose from the dead. "I ascend unto my Father." "I go to prepare a place for you." "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted." (John 20: 17; 14: 3. Acts 2: 33.)

5. He ascended on the fortieth day after his resurrection. And does any ask, Wherefore did he ascend on the fortieth day? Why not sooner, or immediately after his resurrection? We reply, that he delayed his ascension thus long that he might give us infallible proofs of his resurrection, and of the truth of his humanity. "To whom also he shewed himself alive, after his passion, by many infallible proofs." (Acts 1: 3.) And, also, that he might give his disciples instruction in relation to his kingdom — recall to their recollection the things which he had before his death spoken unto them, and add others — and might thus not only establish them, but us also in the truth of his resurrection and humanity. "Being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." (Acts 1: 3.)

6. He ascended not to return before the day of judgment. "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." "Ye do shew the Lord's death until he come." "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things." (Acts 1: 11. John 14: 8. 1 Cor. 11: 26. Acts 3: 21.)

Obj. 1. There is no place beyond heaven. Therefore the ascension of

Christ is no local translation. Ans. Beyond heaven there is no natural place, or such as Aristotle defines to be, *superficies continentis cedentis contento;* but there is a metaphysical, supernatural, or heavenly place; but what, or what manner of place it is, we are not able to understand from the knowledge which we now have. It is sufficient for us, however, to know and believe *that there is such a place*, according to these declarations of Scripture: "I go to prepare a PLACE for you; I will come again, and receive you to myself, that WHERE I am, there ye may be also." "And WHITHER I go, ye know." "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me WHERE I AM." "He was taken UP." "Seek those things which are ABOVE, WHERE Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." "Our conversation is in heaven, FROM WHENCE also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus." (John 14: 2, 3; 17: 24. Acts 1: 2. Col. 3: 1. Phil. 3: 20.) These and similar declarations of Scripture teach that the heaven into which Christ did ascend, and which is above these visible heavens, is truly a place; for the particles ABOVE, WHITHER and WHERE convey the idea of place. Of this place, however, Aristotle was ignorant, and did not believe in it, because he was ignorant of the Scriptures.

To this the Ubiquitarians reply; therefore Christ was translated from a place into that which is no place, and base upon this the following objection: That which is not in any place is everywhere. Christ is not in any place, because he ascended above and beyond the visible heavens, beyond which there is no place. Therefore he is everywhere. Ans. We deny the major proposition, which affirms that to be everywhere which is not in any place; for if this were true the highest heaven would be everywhere; for it is not in any place; and yet it is not everywhere. Again, the minor proposition is true of a natural place; for Christ was taken up where there is no natural place, and is now in no such a natural place; but it is false if it refer to a metaphysical, supernatural place, which does indeed contain, but is not itself contained in any thing by which it is circumscribed. It is in such a place as this, which is beyond the visible heavens, that Christ now is, according to the Scriptures. And still more: that the human nature of Christ is finite and not everywhere, may be inferred from the fact that it was removed by his ascension from one place to another, or to that which is no place, if you please, for it makes but little difference which term we use; for to be everywhere and change places involves a contradiction. It is for this reason also that his Godhead, which alone is infinite, eternal and everywhere, is not said to change places.

But here the Ubiquitarians seek shelter that they may not be wounded by this weapon, or that their position may not be refuted by this argument: That which changes its place is not everywhere. The body of Christ changes its place. Therefore it is not everywhere. They grant the truth of the principal proposition of this syllogism, taking the words, however, in a sense different from that which is their proper signification, viz., that the body of Christ is everywhere, after the manner of majesty; and that it changes its place after the manner of a natural body. But they do not, by this cavil, avoid the contradiction in which their position involves them. For when a different phraseology is employed for the purpose of removing a contradiction, it ought not to express the same thing as that which is predicated, for if it does, it is a mere tautology, and a begging of the question; as if I, imitating them, should say: Air is light as it respects the

manner of light; and is dark as touching the manner of darkness. Again, he is poor after the manner of poverty; and rich after the manner of riches. According to this form of speech the same thing is affirmed of the same thing; for the manner of poverty is nothing different from poverty, and the manner of riches nothing but riches. So now it is with the form of speech which the Ubiquitarians use in regard to the major proposition of the syllogism now under consideration; it expresses the same thing with the words which they ought to explain, and hence does not remove the contradiction. The body of Christ, they affirm, is everywhere after the manner of majesty. Being asked what they mean by majesty, they reply, that it is omnipotency and immensity. To say, therefore, that the body of Christ is everywhere as it respects the manner of majesty, and not as it respects the manner of a natural body, is nothing else, according to their own meaning of the terms, than that the body of Christ is everywhere as touching the manner of immensity, and is not everywhere after the manner of finiteness. By this distinction they imagine that they remove the contradiction in which they are brought by their own false position; but it is a poor triumph which they have achieved. For what is the manner of immensity, but immensity itself; so that immensity and to be immense are predicated of the same thing. Hence, as it is contradictory to say of the same thing, that it is everywhere and changes places, or is not everywhere; so it is also a contradiction to affirm that the same body is immense and finite; or that immensity and finiteness belong to the same thing; or that the same body is everywhere, or immense as it respects the manner of immensity or majesty; and that it is not everywhere, but changes places and is finite, according to the manner of finiteness, or of a natural body. That, therefore, which we have already proven is manifest, that Christ ascended locally. Hence this article is to be understood of a local ascension into heaven.

Obj. 2. Opposites should always be explained in the same manner, so that the opposition may not be lost. The articles, *He ascended into heaven*, and *He descended into hell*, are opposite to each other. Therefore, as the article of Christ's descent into hell is taken figuratively, as expressing the last degree of his humiliation, so the article of his ascension ought to be understood figuratively, expressing the greatest majesty, and not of any local motion. Ans. We reply to the major proposition by making a distinction. Opposites should be explained in the same manner, unless the explanation thus given conflict with the articles of faith, and with other portions of Scripture. But here there would be such a conflict; for the Scriptures explain this article as teaching a local ascension. "He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1: 11.) But the article of the descent of Christ into hell, the Scripture understands of a spiritual descent, as we have shown when discoursing upon it. And not only so, but the analogy of faith requires such an interpretation of each article. Again, we deny the minor proposition; for these two articles are not opposites: The ascension of Christ into heaven is not the highest degree of his glory, as his descent into hell is the last degree of his humiliation. The highest degree of Christ's glory is his sitting at the right hand of the Father. Therefore, we grant the truth of the major proposition if it be referred to Christ's sitting at the right hand of God, the Father; for the article of his descent into hell is the opposite of this. The Scriptures also interpret figuratively these two articles, of the descent of Christ into

hell, and of his sitting at the right hand of the Father. Lastly, if the ascension of Christ is to be understood as placing his two natures upon an equality, all the other articles touching his true humanity would be entirely overthrown.

The two other sophisms of the Ubiquitarians against the true ascension of Christ, are proposed in the following questions of the Catechism. The explanation of them will, therefore, be continued, after which the remaining heads, touching the causes and fruits of his ascension, will be expounded.

Question 47. Is not Christ then with us, even to the the end of the world, as he hath promised ?

Answer. Christ is very man and very God ; with respect to his human nature, he is no more on earth ; but with respect to his Godhead, majesty, grace and Spirit, he is at no time absent from us.

EXPOSITION.

This question anticipates an objection on the part of the Ubiquitarians: Christ promised that he would be with us always, even unto the end of the world. Therefore he did not so ascend into heaven as to be no longer on earth and everywhere by his humanity. Ans. There is here more in the conclusion than legitimately follows from the premises. Christ speaks of his person, to which he attributes that which belongs with propriety to the Godhead, just as he also said that he was in heaven before his ascension. In like manner he said before his passion, when he as yet conversed with his disciples on earth, "I and my Father will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14: 23.) This he spake of his Divinity by which he was, and is in heaven, and everywhere, and by which he is present with us in the same way in which the Father is. So we might also turn the argument against them by reasoning thus: "I go away," said Christ. "I leave the world." "Me ye have not always." (John 14: 28; 16: 28. Matt. 26: 11.) Therefore he is evidently not with us. But this is attributed in an improper sense to his other nature, his humanity, which remains with us by virtue of that personal union which exists between the two natures of Christ, his divine and human, which union consists in the mysterious and wonderful indissoluble joining together of these two natures in one person, in such a manner that these two natures, thus united, constitute the essence of the person of Christ; so that one nature would be destroyed if separated from the other; and yet each retains its own peculiar properties, which distinguish it from the other. The explanation which Augustin gives of this subject is this: "*That which Christ says, Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, is fulfilled according to his majesty, providence and unspeakable grace. But with respect to the human nature which the Word assumed, according to which he was born of the Virgin Mary, apprehended by the Jews, nailed to the cross, taken down from the cross, wrapped in linen cloth, buried in the sepulchre, and which was seen after his resurrection, with respect to this his humanity, ye shall not always have him with you. And why? Because, when he had conversed with his disciples for the space of forty days, being bodily present with them, and*

when they had accompanied him, to see, not to follow him, he ascended into heaven, and is no longer here. For he is now in heaven, seated at the right hand of God; and is here as to the presence of his majesty, which has not departed from us. Or, it may be thus expressed: Christ is always present with us with respect to his majesty; but as it regards the presence of his humanity, it was truly said to his disciples, Me ye have not always with you. The Church enjoyed Christ only a few days as it respects the presence of his humanity; now it apprehends him only by faith, and does not see him with the natural eye." Christ is, therefore, present with us, 1. By his Spirit and Godhead. 2. By our faith, and the confidence with which we behold him. 3. By mutual love; because we love him, and he loves us in such a way as not to forget us. 4. By union with his human nature; for it is the same Spirit which is in us and him, that unites us to him. 5. In the hope of consummation, which is the certain hope of coming to him.

Question 48. But if his human nature is not present wherever his Godhead is, are then these two natures in Christ separated from one another.

Answer. Not at all; for since the Godhead is incomprehensible and omnipresent, it must necessarily follow that the same is not limited with the human nature he assumed, and yet remains personally united to it.

EXPOSITION.

This question contains another argument, or objection, which the Ubiquitarians are wont to urge. The two natures, say they, which meet in the person of Christ, are joined by an inseparable union. Therefore wherever the Godhead of Christ is, there his humanity must also necessarily be. Ans. These two natures are joined together in such a way, that the properties of each still remain distinct. There is, therefore, no change of the one into the other, which would be the case, if both were infinite, and every where.

To this answer they oppose the following objections: 1. Where there are two natures, one of which is not where the other is, they are separated from each other, and do not remain personally united. In the person of Christ there are two natures which remain personally united. Therefore, the human nature of Christ must necessarily be wherever his Godhead is, or else this union will be destroyed. Ans. The major proposition is true if it be understood of two natures which are equal, that is, which are equally finite, or infinite: but it is false if it has reference to two natures which are not equal, if one, for instance, be finite, and the other infinite. For a nature that is finite, cannot be at one and the same time in many places; but that which is infinite may be entire in the finite, and at the same time be complete without it; and this we may regard as being the case in relation to Christ. His human nature, which is finite, is in but one place; but his divine nature, which is infinite, is in his human nature, and without it, and for this reason every where. Obj. 2. There must, however, at least, be a separation between these natures in Christ, where the

human nature is not, although this separation may not be where it is. Ans. Not at all; because the Godhead is complete, and the same in the human nature, and without it, according to what Gregory Nazianzen say, "*The Word is in his own temple, and is every where; but is in an especial manner in his own temple.*" Obj. 3. But if the human nature of Christ be not endowed with divine properties, it follows that there is no difference between him and the saints; for there can be no difference between Christ and Peter, unless it be in the equality of his human with his divine nature. Ans. The antecedent is false, because there are a variety of distinctions between Christ and the saints, beside that to which reference is here had. Obj. 4. The difference between Christ and the saints is either in substance, or in properties and gifts. It is not in substance, because the whole Godhead dwells as well in the saints as in Christ. Therefore it is in properties and gifts. Ans. We deny that the difference which holds between Christ and the saints is either in substance, or in properties and gifts; because this enumeration is not sufficiently full. There is a third difference, which is not here referred to, which is the mysterious and personal union of the two natures, the divine and human, which is in Christ, but not in Peter, or any of the saints. In Christ dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, in such a manner that Christ-man is God, and Christ-God is man; but it cannot be said that the Godhead dwells thus in Peter, or in any of the saints. Obj. 5. But it is said, "God hath given him a name which is above every name." (Phil. 2: 9.) Ans. He hath given him this name together with his Godhead, that is to say, by virtue of the personal union of the two natures which meet in Christ, and not by virtue of any equalling of these natures. For just as the Godhead is given to Christ, so also are the properties thereof.

The Ubiquitarians, who urge these objections, are guilty of these three most pestilential errors, or they may, at least, be regarded as attaching themselves to the views which they hold in relation to this subject. 1. With Nestorius they separate the natures in Christ, inasmuch as they substitute for the union of these natures, the equalling, or the operation, and working of one by the other: for two things, two spirits and two natures may be equal, or act mutually through each other, even without a personal union. 2. With Eutyches they confound and blend these natures, inasmuch as they make them equal. 3. They take from us the weapons with which we oppose, and refute the Arian and Sabellian heresies; for they weaken the proofs of all those portions of Scripture which attest the Divinity of Christ, by attempting to establish from them the equality of his human, with his divine nature.

III. For what purpose did Christ ascend into heaven.?

Christ ascended into heaven for his own glory, and for that of his Father. It was proper, and necessary, that he should have a heavenly kingdom. Hence it was not expedient that he should continue on earth. "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." "Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Eph. 4: 10. Phil. 2: 9, 11.) It also belonged to, and was proper that Christ

who is the Head should be glorified with an excellency, and superiority of gifts above all the members, which could not have been the case had he remained on earth. And still further, Christ ascended for our benefit, and that in these three respects.

1. That he might make intercession for us in heaven. "Who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Rom. 8: 34.) He intercedes for us, *first*; *by the value of his sacrifice*, already offered in our behalf, which is so great that the Father ought, on this account, to receive us into favor. *Secondly*, *by his own will*, by which he continually desires, that the Father would receive us into favor at the sight, and recollection of that sacrifice which he accomplished in his own body. *Thirdly*, *by the consent of the Father*, approving the will, and desire of the Son, accepting the value of his sacrifice, as a sufficient satisfaction for our sins, and together with the Son receiving us into favor. It is by making intercession for us in this manner that Christ applies unto us the benefits and merit of his death. And the entire glorification of the mediator, consisting in his resurrection, ascension and sitting at the right hand of the Father, was necessary in order that this application might be made unto us. But some one may, perhaps, be ready to object and say; but Christ interceded for us already when he was on earth? To this we reply, that the intercession which Christ made on earth had respect to that which was yet future; for it was made upon the condition, that the mediator, after he had accomplished his sacrifice on earth, should for ever appear in the sanctuary on high.

2. That we might also ascend, and have assurance thereof. Christ himself says in the gospel of John, "I go to prepare a place for you." "In my Father's house are many mansions," that is, places to abide for ever; for he speaks of our continuance there. Christ ascended; therefore we shall also ascend. This conclusion is proper, and forcible; because Christ is the head, and we are the members; he is also the first-begotten among many brethren.

3. That he might send the Holy Spirit, and by him gather, comfort, and defend his Church, even to the end of the world. Hence he says, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." "Which (Holy Ghost) be shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord." (John 16: 7. Tit. 3: 6.)

Obj. He gave the Holy Ghost both before and after his resurrection. Therefore he did not ascend for the purpose of sending him. Ans. He had, indeed, given the Holy Ghost before his ascension into heaven, but not in such copious effusions as on the day of Penticost. And whatever influences of the Spirit were given to the church from the beginning of the world, were given on account of Christ, who was to be manifested in the flesh, and would then reign in his human nature, and shed on us abundantly the Holy Ghost. Hence the Holy Ghost, on account of the decree of God, was not given in such large measures before the ascension of Christ; because God had determined to effect both by man glorified. The mission of the Holy Spirit was the chief part of the glory of Christ. It is therefore said, in John 7: 39, "The Holy Ghost was not yet given," that is, the wonderful, and copious sending, or outpouring of the Spirit was not yet given, "because that Jesus was not yet glorified." "If I depart I will send the Comforter unto you." (John 16: 7.) This is the reason

why the mission of the Holy Ghost was deferred until after the ascension of Christ into heaven.

IV. In what does the ascension of Christ differ from ours?

Christ's ascension and ours agree, *first*, in this, that both, he and we, ascend to the same place. They agree, *secondly*, in this that both, he and we, ascend to glory. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." (John 17: 24.)

They differ in the following respect: 1. Christ ascended by his own peculiar power and virtue. "No man hath ascended up to heaven (that is, by his own peculiar virtue) but the Son of man." (John 3: 13.) Our ascension, on the other hand, will be effected by, and for the sake of, Christ. "I go to prepare a place for you." "I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." (John 14: 2; 17: 24.) 2. Christ ascended that he might be head, we shall ascend that we may be members; he ascended to glory such as is proper for the head, we shall ascend to glory such as is becoming those who are members; he ascended that he might sit at the right hand of the Father, we shall ascend that we may sit upon his throne and that of his Father, not in the same dignity, but only by a participation therein. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Rev. 3: 21.) We shall, therefore, be partakers of his glory, a just proportion being preserved between the members and the head. 3. The ascension of Christ is the cause of ours, but not the contrary. 4. Whole Christ ascended, but not the whole of Christ; because he ascended only as to his human nature, and not as it respects his divine nature, which is also on earth. But we shall ascend whole, and the whole of us; because we have only a finite nature, and that but one.

Question 49. Of what advantage to us is Christ's ascension into heaven?

Answer. First, that he is our advocate in the presence of his Father in heaven: secondly, that we have our flesh in heaven, as a sure pledge that he, as the head, will also take up to himself, us, his members: thirdly, that he sends us his Spirit, as an earnest, by whose power we "seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and not things on earth."

EXPOSITION.

V. What are the fruits of the ascension of Christ?

The fruits, or benefits of Christ's ascension into heaven are chiefly these three:

1. His intercession with the Father in our behalf. This embraces, as we have already remarked, the perpetual force and virtue of the sacrifice of Christ; the divine and human will of Christ which is favorable to us, by which he desires that we may be received of the Father for the sake of his sacrifice; and the consent of the Father, falling in with this will of his Son,

and approving of his satisfaction as a sufficient atonement for our sins. In a word, it is the will of the Father and the Son, that the sacrifice of Christ may for ever avail in our behalf. Obj. But intercession was made before the ascension of Christ; yea, even before his advent. Therefore it is not one of the fruits of his ascension. Ans. It is true, indeed, that intercession was made before Christ's entrance into heaven, but it depended upon that which would be made after his ascension, that is, it was made with reference to that intercession which was yet to come, just as it was with every thing that pertained to the reception of the fathers, into the favor of God from the beginning of the world. Again, the intercession which was made before the ascension of Christ was not such as that which is now made. The mediator, under the Old Testament, made intercession with reference to the value of his sacrifice yet to be accomplished, and the Father received the saints of old into favor, by virtue of that sacrifice which was yet to be offered; but now he receives us for the sake of the satisfaction which Christ has already made. So also in the church of old sins were remitted, and the Holy Spirit was given on account of a future sacrifice; but now in view of this sacrifice already offered. But the value of the one sacrifice of Christ continues for ever, because "by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10: 14.) Nor is the fact that Christ no longer offers sacrifices a proof of the imperfection of his offering. It is rather an argument in favor of its perfect character; for if he were frequently to offer sacrifice after the manner of the Levitical priests, this would be an evidence that he could not by one sacrifice make those perfect who would come to God. But he has by one sacrifice perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Hence he now performs his priestly office, not by offering sacrifices frequently, nor by meriting favors for us in the same way, but by applying unto us, through the perpetual and infinite worth and dignity of his one sacrifice, grace, righteousness and the Holy Spirit, which is certainly something vastly greater, than if he would repeat his sacrifice.

2. *Our glorification results* from Christ's ascension into heaven; for if he who is our head has ascended, we also, who are his members, shall certainly ascend. Hence, Christ himself said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14: 2, 3.) Obj. But Elijah and Enoch ascended before Christ. Therefore, the ascension of Christ is not the cause of our ascension. Ans. They ascended in respect to, and by virtue of Christ's ascension, which was yet future. The ascension and glorification of Christ are not only the type, but also the cause of our ascension and glorification; for had he not been glorified, we could not be glorified. The Father has decreed to give us all things through the Messiah, and has placed all things in his hands. Bu how could Christ have given us a kingdom, if he himself, as the first-begotten, had not first taken possession of it? And in as much as he has ascended and now reigns there, he will translate us, who are citizens of his kingdom, to the same place. "Where I am, there shall also my servant be." "I will receive you unto myself; that where I am there ye may be also." (John 12: 26; 14: 3.)

3. The third fruit of the ascension of Christ is *the mission of the Holy Ghost*, by whom he gathers, comforts and defends his church, even to the end of the world. The Holy Ghost was indeed given also under the law,

before the advent and ascension of Christ; but, as has been remarked, it was in respect to his ascension and glorification, which were then still future, and was not only a fruit of it, but also a part of it. And again, since the glorification of Christ, the Holy Ghost has been given more copiously, as on the day of Pentecost, which had been foretold by the prophet Joel; "And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh," &c. It is by the efficacy and influence of this Spirit that we *seek those things which are above*, because it is there that our treasure is, and there our goods, and that because Christ has ascended for the purpose of making those good things ours, which were there long before. This is the argument which the Apostle employs in Col. 3: 1.

There are other fruits which result from the ascension of Christ, less important than those which we have specified. They are such as the following:

4. The ascension of Christ is a proof that remission of sins is fully granted to all those that believe, in as much as he could not have sat down upon the throne of God, if he had not endured the punishment which our sins required. For where sin is, there death is also. "He shall reprove the world of righteousness, because I go to my Father." (John 16: 10.)

5. It is a proof that Christ is indeed conqueror of death, sin and the devil.

6. It is an evidence that we shall never be left destitute of comfort; because it was one great object of Christ's ascension, that he might send the Holy Ghost. "If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." (John 16: 7. Eph. 4: 8.)

7. It is an assurance that Christ will for ever defend us, since we know that he is our ever glorious head, and is exalted above all principalities and powers.

What then are we to understand by the Article, *I believe in Jesus Christ, who ascended into heaven?* It means, I believe, first, that he did truly, and not merely in show, ascend into heaven, and is now there, and will be called upon at the right hand of God, until he shall come from thence to judge the world. And, secondly, that he has ascended for my sake and thy sake, and now appears in the presence of God, makes intercession for us, sends us the Holy Spirit, and will at length take us to himself, that we may be with him where he is, and reign with him in glory.

NINETEENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 50. Why is it added, "and sitteth at the right hand of God?"

Answer. Because Christ is ascended into heaven for this end, that he might there appear as head of his church, by whom the Father governs all things.

EXPOSITION.

To ascend into heaven, and to sit at the right hand of God, are not the same; because the one may be without the other. This Article, which

refers to Christ's sitting at the right hand of God, differs from his ascension into heaven in the three following particulars: 1. The end of the former article is expressed in this; because it was for this reason that Christ ascended into heaven, that he might sit at the right hand of God. 2. Christ sits forever at the right hand of the Father; but he ascended only once into heaven. 3. The angels ascend, and we shall also ascend into heaven; but neither they nor we shall sit at the right hand of the Father. "To which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy foot-stool." (Heb. 1: 13.) Much less has God said this of any man, Christ only excepted.

Concerning this sitting at the right hand of God, we must consider more particularly:

I. *What the right hand of God signifies in the Scriptures:*
II. *What it is to sit at the right hand of God:*
III. *Whether Christ has alway sat at God's right hand:*
VI. *What the fruits of his sitting at the right hand of the Father are.*

I. What the right hand of God signifies in the Scriptures.

The right hand, and other members of our body, are attributed to God in an improper sense. As used in the Scriptures, the phrase, *right hand of God* signifies two things. First, the supreme power and virtue, or omnipotence of God. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour." "The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly." "Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy." (Acts 5: 31. Ps. 118: 16. Ex. 15: 6.) And secondly, supreme dignity and glory, or majesty. It is in this second sense that we are to understand it as here used.

II. What it is to sit at the right hand of God.

To sit at the right hand of God is to be a person equal with God in power and glory, by whom the Father works immediately, and governs all things. According to the definition which is commonly given to this phrase, it means to reign in equal power and glory with the Father. This is true of Christ; for he does all things in the same manner as the Father does, and is endowed with equal power with the Father, which he also exercises. But the Son has always reigned in this manner. The same may also be said of the Holy Ghost, who is nevertheless not said in the Scriptures to sit at the right hand of God, and does not sit there; because the Father does not govern all things, and especially the church, by the Holy Ghost; but by the Son. Hence this commonly received definition is not sufficient and complete. Others confound his sitting with his ascension, and say that they express the same thing. But we have already specified certain particulars in which they differ; and it is absurd to suppose that there would be such a repetition of the same thing in a creed so brief and condensed.

The phrase, *sitteth at the right hand of God*, is borrowed from the custom of kings and monarchs, who place those whom they wish to honor at their right hand, and have their own assessors, to whom they entrust certain departments of the government. It is in this way that Christ is said to sit

at the right hand of the Father, because the Father will govern and rule immediately all things, both in heaven and earth, by him. This sitting, therefore, is the supreme dignity and glory which the Father gave to Christ after his ascension, or it is the highest exaltation of the mediator, in his kingdom and priesthood. It is peculiar to Christ; because he alone is that almighty person and mediator through whom the Father immediately governs all things, and especially his church, which he defends against all her enemies. This glory and sitting of Christ at the right hand of the Father consists in these four things:

1. *In the perfection of his divine nature*, or in the equality of the Word with the Father, which he did not then receive, but always had. This his Divinity, although it was hid, as it were, and unobserved during the whole of the time of his humiliation, afterwards revealed itself with power and majesty.

2. *In the perfection and exaltation of the human nature of Christ*, which excellency consists, first, in the personal union of the human nature with the Word. "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2: 9.) And, secondly, in the excellency of gifts, such as wisdom, power, glory, majesty, and others which are far greater and more in number than those which either the angels or men have received; and by which he also greatly excels all creatures in heaven or on earth. "Of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." "For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." (John 1: 16; 3: 34.)

3. *In the perfection and excellence of the office of mediator*, which is prophetical, priestly and regal, which Christ now, as the glorified head of his church, gloriously executes in heaven in his human nature. For now he intercedes in glory, grants the Holy Spirit, and gloriously preserves and defends his church. This excellency of Christ's office is his exaltation itself in his kingdom and priesthood, which is the same as to say, that it is the laying aside the infirmity of his human nature, and the consummation of that glory which was due him, as well by reason of his office as prophet, priest and king, as by that of his person, as God. "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." (Matt. 28: 18.)

4. *In the perfection of honor, reverence and worship*, which angels and men ascribe and give unto Christ equally with the Father; because he is acknowledged, adored and magnified by all as the Lord and Head of all. "Let all the angels of God worship him." "To which of the angels said he, Sit on my right hand?" "God hath given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," &c. (Ps. 9: 7. Heb. 1: 6, 13. Phil. 2: 9.) This name, of which the Apostle here speaks, consists in the excellency of the person and office of Christ, and is a declaration of both by his visible majesty, that all may acknowledge and be constrained to confess that he is that king by whom God governs all things. It was thus that Stephen saw him standing on the right hand of God, crowned with visible majesty and glory, and adored him. Christ had, indeed, even before this his exaltation at the right hand of the Father, certain parts of the excellency of his person and office, but now he attained the consummation of his glory.

From what has now been said, we may give a more complete definition of Christ's sitting at the right hand of the Father. It is to have the same and equal power with the Father: to excel all the angels and men in his

human nature, both in the number and excellency of the gifts which were conferred upon him, and also in visible glory and majesty: to declare himself Lord of angels and men, and so of all things which are created: to rule immediately, in the name of the Father, his kingdom in heaven, and the whole world, and especially to govern the church in the same manner by his power: and, finally, to be acknowledged and praised by every one as Lord and Head of all. But how and in what respects Christ is said to be our Head, has already been explained in the exposition of the thirty-second Question of the Catechism.

The honor, therefore, which attaches itself to this sitting at the right hand of God does not belong to the Father, nor the Holy Ghost, but is peculiar to Christ alone, and is, indeed, the highest degree or consummation of the honor which the Son obtained, and that in respect to both natures, but in a manner peculiar to each. In respect to his human nature it is a real communication of heavenly gifts, or perfect glory, which the humanity of Christ had not before his ascension. But, in relation to his divine nature, this sitting at the right hand of God does not include any change of his Divinity; but is merely the laying aside his humiliation, and the manifestation of that glory which he had with the Father before the foundation of the world, but which he had concealed during the time of his humiliation; and the right and title to the free and full possession of that which his Godhead had laid aside, as it were, in assuming our nature. For as the Godhead humbled itself, so it was again placed at the right hand of the Father, that is to say, it was gloriously manifested in the flesh. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17: 5.)

This exposition which we have now given of this Article of the Creed, overthrows many objections which have been brought forward in relation to this subject, of which we may mention the following:

Obj. 1. The Holy Ghost is also equal with the Father. Therefore, we may correctly say that he also sits at the right hand of the Father. Ans. We deny the conclusion which is here drawn, because the argument is based upon an incorrect definition; for although the Holy Ghost, as well as the Father, be God, Lord and Ruler of the church, yet it does not belong to him to sit at the right hand of the Father, but to Christ alone, because he assumed human nature, humbled himself, died, rose again, ascended into heaven and is mediator. Again, the Father works immediately through Christ alone, but mediately through the Holy Ghost; for the same order which exists in relation to the persons of the Godhead, must be preserved in their operation. The Father does not work by, but of himself, because he is of none. The Son works by, and not of himself, because he is begotten of the Father. The Holy Ghost works by himself, but from the Father and the Son, from whom he proceeded. Therefore, the Father works immediately by the Son, because he is before the Holy Ghost, not however in time, but only in the order of existence, or of working; whilst he works mediately by the Holy Ghost. It is for this reason that the Son, who is mediator, is correctly said to sit at the right hand of the Father.

Obj. 2. Christ was always, even before his ascension, the glorious Head and King of the church. Therefore his sitting at the right hand of the Father was before his ascension into heaven. Ans. We have here, as in the former objection, an incomplete definition, from which the argument

is deduced. Christ was, indeed, always glorious, but was not always exalted in the office of mediator, which is to say, in his kingdom and priesthood. The consummation of his glory, which consists in the administration of his kingdom, and priesthood in heaven, commenced with his exaltation at the right hand of the Father.

Obj. 3. But Christ says, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne," &c. Therefore we shall also sit at the right hand of God. Ans. We shall sit with Christ by a participation in his glory. We admit also that the throne of the Father and the Son is the same. Upon this throne many sit; some in higher, others in lower places; but not in the same dignity. Many counsellors may sit near the king; but the chancellor alone sits at his right hand. Christ will not give to another the supreme dignity and glory given him of the Father.

III. Has Christ always sat at the right hand of God?

The curiosity of man, which is disposed to pry into every thing, makes it necessary for us to say something in relation to this question. In speaking upon it, however, we must distinguish as to the natures of Christ, and then as to time.

First, Christ has always sat at the right hand of the Father as it respects his Godhead, if we understand this phrase to mean that he reigns in equal power with the Father, and that he is endowed with equal honor and glory; for his divine nature was from everlasting equal to the Father in honor and power. The same thing is true if we understand the phrase, *to sit at the right hand of God* to signify that Christ is the Head of the church; for the Son was always that person by whom the Father governed all things from the beginning, as he also created all things by him. In this sense Christ was placed at the right hand of the Father by his eternal generation. Secondly, Christ was always at the right hand of God according to his Divinity, by virtue of his appointment to the office of mediator which was made from everlasting. This appointment had respect even to his divine nature from the beginning. Thirdly, the same may be said of the Godhead of Christ, from the fact that he commenced to execute, and has executed the office of mediator from the very beginning of the world.

But Christ, according to his Divinity, was placed at the right hand of the Father after his ascension into heaven, in as far as his Godhead then began to manifest itself gloriously in his human nature in which it had concealed itself, so to speak, during the time of his humiliation. For when Christ lived on earth his Godhead had also humbled itself, not, indeed, by becoming weaker, but only by veiling and not openly manifesting itself. Christ was, therefore, also as to his divine nature, placed at the right hand of the Father in this sense, that he then laid down that humility which he had taken upon himself for our sakes, and made an open declaration of that glory which he had with the Father before the foundation of the world, but which he had concealed during the time of his humiliation; he was exalted, we say, by manifesting, and not by adding any thing to his Godhead which it did not before possess, nor by making it more powerful or glorious, nor by declaring it before God, but before men, and by fully and freely claiming his own right, which his Divinity had, as it were, given up in assuming our nature. Hence he says, "And now, O Father, glorify thou

me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17: 5.) This glory of which Christ here speaks, he had not with men. He therefore prays, that as he always had this with the Father, so he might also manifest it unto men. This, however, is not to be understood in such a sense as though the Word underwent any change as to his Divinity, but only in the sense in which we have already explained it.

In reference, however, to his humanity, Christ was then according to this, first placed at the right hand of the Father, when he ascended into heaven. It was at this time that he obtained his glorification, when he received that which he had not before. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory." (Luke 24: 26.)

Obj. 1. He who sits at the right hand of God is everywhere. Christ sits at the right hand of God. Therefore he is everywhere. Ans. This may be granted in respect to the person of Christ, by the communication of properties. But if any one infers the same thing also in regard to his humanity, there will be more in the conclusion than in the premises.

Obj. 2. The right hand of God is everywhere. The human nature of Christ is at the right hand of God. Therefore it is everywhere. Ans. We deny the conclusion which is here drawn; because there are four terms in this syllogism. The right hand of God, and to sit at his right hand are not the same. The minor proposition should be thus expressed: The human nature of Christ is the right hand of God. But if thus expressed it is not true. Again, the major proposition is not absolutely true; for a part of Christ's sitting at the right hand of God, is that visible glory and majesty with which his human nature is adorned, and with which Stephen saw him crowned in heaven. This is not everywhere, but only in that place where his body is.

Obj. 3. Christ ascended above all heavens that he might fill all things, that is, with the presence of his humanity. Ans. This is a false interpretation of the words of the Apostle, Eph. 4: 10. He ascended that he might fill all things with his gifts and graces, but not with his flesh, skin and bones, which would, indeed, be monstrous and unreasonable, and give the devil occasion to bring the glory of God in derision.

Obj. 4. That nature which is endowed with omnipotence is everywhere. The humanity of Christ is endowed with omnipotence. Therefore it is everywhere. Ans. That nature is, indeed, everywhere which is endowed with omnipotence, by a real transfusion or communication of properties, but not that which is endowed with it by a personal union. There are, however, many things conferred upon the humanity of Christ by real transfusion, viz, other qualities than those which he had in his humiliation and upon the cross. For there were far more and greater gifts conferred upon his human nature after his ascension, than were conferred either upon angels or men. In respect to this bestowment of these gifts Christ, according to his humanity, was placed at the right hand of God: but according to his Divinity, he is said to be placed at the right hand of the Father, in as far as this was glorified, and in as far as he, being taken up into heaven, manifested the same in his flesh, and has obtained the perfection of glory, and the highest degree of glorification in the manner already explained.

Question 51. What profit is this glory of Christ, our head, unto us?

Answer. First, that by his Holy Spirit he poureth heavenly graces upon us, his members; and then, that by his power, he defends and preserves us against all his enemies.

EXPOSITION.

IV. What are the fruits of Christ's sitting at the right hand of the Father?

The fruits of his sitting at the right hand of the Father comprehend all the benefits of the kingdom and priesthood of Christ glorified. They are such as the following: 1. Intercession for us. 2. The gathering, governing and preservation of the church by his word and Spirit. 3. The defence of the church against all her enemies. 4. The rejection and destruction of the enemies of the church. 5. The glorification of the church, and the removal of all the infirmities to which it is here subject. These fruits of Christ's sitting at the right hand of God, naturally grow out of the office which he sustains. The benefits of the kingdom of Christ glorified are, that he rules us through the ministry of his word and Spirit, that he preserves his ministry, gives his church resting places, makes his word effectual in the conversion of the elect, raises them up at length from the dead, delivers them from all their infirmities, glorifies them, wipes all tears from their eyes, places them upon his throne, and makes them kings and priests unto his Father. The fruit of the priesthood of Christ glorified is, that he appears and intercedes prevailingly for us in heaven, so that the Father does not refuse us any thing on account of the virtue and force of his intercession. It is in view of this, that we obtain this precious comfort, that since he who is our king, our head, our flesh and brother, sits at the right hand of the Father; therefore he will grant unto us his members every good. He will grant unto us the Holy Spirit, so that we shall be quickened and glorified: he will bestow upon us celestial gifts, such as a true knowledge of God, faith, repentance, and every christian virtue, and he will accomplish all this for us, as well on account of the brotherly love which he cherishes towards us, as from the office which he sustains as our head. And, because we have such a High Priest, who is set down at the right hand of the Father, there is no reason why we should doubt in regard to our salvation, for he will preserve it safely for us, and at length bestow it upon us. "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands." "I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." (John 10: 28; 17: 24.)

What now is the application which it becomes us to make of this article relating to Christ's sitting at the right hand of the Father? It is this: I believe that Christ, possessed of supreme and divine majesty, intercedes for me and all the elect, and that he applies to us his sacrifice, that the Father, by and for his sake, may bestow upon me eternal life; and that he may also rule and defend me in this life, against the devil and all dangers, and that he will at length glorify and grant me eternal life.

Question 52. What comfort is it to thee, that "Christ shall come again to judge the quick and the dead?"

Answer. That in all my sorrows and persecutions, with uplifted head, I look for the very same person who before offered himself, for my sake, to the tribunal of God, and hath removed all curse from me, to come as judge from heaven; who shall cast all his and my enemies into everlasting condemnation, but shall translate me, with all his chosen ones, to himself, into heavenly joys and glory.

EXPOSITION.

The second coming of Christ, the end of the world and the last judgment, although they differ somewhat from each other, are, nevertheless, all comprehended in this Article. We shall treat of them in common, in as much as they are closely linked together; yet in such a manner as to give special attention to the final judgment; because it would be of little account for us to think and speak of the second coming of Christ, if we did not, at the same time, consider the end for which he will come.

The subjects which specially claim our attentton in connection with the final judgment, are the following:

I. *Whether there be a future judgment:*
II. *What it is:*
III. *Who the judge will be:*
IV. *Whence and whither he will come:*
V. *The manner in which he will come:*
VI. *The subjects of this judgment:*
VII. *What the character of the sentence, and the execution of this judgment will be:*
VIII. *The objects of this judgment:*
IX. *When it will take place:*
X. *The reasons why we should expect it:*
XI. *The reasons why God has left the time of it uncertain:*
XII. *Why it is deferred: and,*
XIII. *Whether it may be desired and looked for.*

I. Will there be a future judgment?

This question is necessary. The Scriptures have also foretold that there shall come, in the last days, scoffers, who will regard this article as nothing more than a fable: "Saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," &c. (2 Pet. 3: 4.) It is true, indeed, that philosophy cannot fully and clearly establish the doctrine of the final judgment: nor does it, on the other hand, contain anything that would conflict with it. The whole certainty of this doctrine depends upon the teachings of the church and the oracles of God. And, although the philosopher, having a faint glimmering of light, might perhaps say, and reason might also decide in the same way, that it ought to be well with the good and ill with the wicked, and that it is not probable that man was created merely to be subjected to the evils and miseries of this life; yet man, having lost the knowledge of the righteousness, goodness and truth of God, could not, when left to himself, conclude with any great certainty whether there will be any future judgment, or when it will be; much less the circumstance with which it will be attended. Hence we are forced to rest the truth of this doctrine chiefly upon

the testimony of the Scriptures. The arguments which philosophy adduces are, indeed, forcible in themselves; but they cannot be explained or drawn out with any clearness, unless they are taken in connection with theology, so that their force is only felt by those who enjoy the advantages of a supernatural revelation. The proofs which theology, or the doctrine of the gospel, furnishes are such as these:

1. The declarations of Scripture, from the Old and New Testaments, touching this subject clearly and explicitly teach the doctrine of a future judgment. The testimony of Daniel is here in point: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." And a few verses before he says: "The Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set and the books were opened. The beast was slain, and the body destroyed and given to the burning flame." (Dan. 7 · 13, 14, 9, 10.) So also the prophecy of Enoch, quoted by the Apostle Jude, bears similar testimony: "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 14, 15.) The discourses of Christ are equally explicit upon this point, especially the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew. The same may also be said of the writings of the Apostles. "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance in that he raised him from the dead." "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air." "It is appointed unto men once to die; but after this the judgment." "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away: and I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." (Acts 17: 31. 1 Thes. 4: 16. Heb. 9: 37. Rev. 20: 11, 12.) Nor does the certainty of a future judgment merely appear from these and similar explicit declarations of God's word; but it is also evident from other portions of Scripture, from which we may deduce these proper and just conclusions:

2. *From the decree of God*, by which he ordained, and determined with himself, from everlasting to raise the dead. This purpose can never be altered as God is unchangeable. A copy, or transcripts of this decree, may be found in the thirty seventh chap. of Ez., whilst Enoch, Elijah and Christ, are examples of it.

3. *From the omnipotence of God*, by which he is able to accomplish things which are impossible in the judgment of reason. Christ uses this argument in refuting the Sadducees. "Ye do err not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." (Matt. 22: 29.)

4. *From the justice of God*, which demands that it be well with the good, and ill with the wicked, and that perfectly. But this does not come to pass in this life. There must, therefore, be another life in which God will render full justice to every one. It is in this way that Paul comforts himself, and all the godly under the trials to which we are exposed. "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels." "Son, remember that thou, in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." (2 Thes. 1: 6. Luke 16: 25.)

5. *From the end for which God* created the human race. The purpose of God is never thwarted; he always obtains his end. He created man for this purpose, that he might be the temple in which he would dwell, and that he might communicate joy and blessedness to man. But this does not take place here in this life, neither can it here take place; and as God would not create so excellent a creature as man for perpetual misery, we may infer with certainty that there will be a change. God is never disappointed in his purpose, nor will he permit the temple of the Holy Ghost to be given over to perpetual corruption. This happiness, too, is a part of the image of God in which man was created; and as it was destroyed by the devil, God, who is greater than the devil, will restore it. Therefore it is not only probable, according to the reasoning of philosophers, but it is also most certain that man was not created to suffer these evils but for a better end, which although it is not obtained in this life on account of various hinderances, will, nevertheless, certainly be attained in the end. The resurrection and happiness of our bodies is also confirmed by this argument; according to what Paul says: "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you." (1 Cor. 6: 19.)

6. *From the glory of God.* God created man that he might for ever praise and glorify him, which cannot take place without the resurrection and the judgment. All other arguments may be referred to these.

II. What the final judgment is.

In every judgment amongst men we have the accused, the accuser, the judge, the case, the trial, the law according to which a decision is given, the sentence of acquittal or condemnation, and the execution thereof according to the law. Hence a human judgment, in general, is the examination of a case by a regular judge according to just laws, and the passing and execution of the sentence either by acquitting or punishing the guilty.

From this it is easy to give a definition of the final judgment which God will execute through Christ. The judge, in this case, will have no need of accusers or witnesses, inasmuch as he himself will make the works of all manifest, being himself the searcher of hearts. There will then merely be the judge, the guilty, the law, the sentence and its execution. The final judgment is, therefore, that judgment which will take place at the end of

the world, when Christ the judge will descend in a visible manner from heaven in a cloud in the glory and majesty of his Father and the holy angels, when all men who have lived from the beginning of the world will be raised, whilst those who will then be living shall be suddenly changed, and when all will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, who will pass sentence upon all, and who will then cast the wicked with the devils into everlasting punishment, but will receive the godly to himself, that they may, with him and the blessed angels, enjoy eternal felicity and glory in heaven. "He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1: 11.) Or, we may define the last judgment in a few words to be the disclosure of all hearts, and the revelation of all those things which have been done by men, and a separation between the righteous and the wicked, which God will execute through Christ, who will pronounce and execute sentence upon all according to the doctrine of the law and gospel, which will result in the perfect deliverance of the church, and the banishment of the wicked and devils into everlasting punishment.

The holy Scriptures corroborate all the different parts of this definition, as is evident from the passages which we shall here adduce. 1. There will be a disclosure and revelation of all the thoughts and actions of men; for the books shall be opened, that the secrets of the heart may be made manifest. (Rev. 20: 12.) 2. There will be a separation between the righteous and the wicked; for "the judge shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." (Matt. 25: 31, 33.) 3. This separation will be made by God himself; and therefore be most holy and righteous. "Is God unrighteous? For then how shall he judge the world?" (Rom. 3: 6.) It will be effected through Christ: because "the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son." "God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world by that man," &c. (John 5: 22. Acts 17: 31.) 4. Sentence will also be pronounced: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." To those on his left he shall say, "Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. 25: 34, 41.) 5. The execution will be eternal. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." 6. The righteous and wicked will be judged according to the law and gospel, which means, that they will be declared righteous or wicked at the tribunal of Christ. The acquittal of the righteous will be principally according to the gospel, but will be confirmed by the law. The condemnation of the wicked, on the other hand, will be chiefly by the law, and confirmed by the gospel. Sentence will be passed upon the wicked according to their own merits; but upon the righteous according to the merits of Christ applied to them by faith, the truth of which will then be made manifest by their works which shall be brought to light. The righteous themselves will then also confess that their reward is not of merit, but of grace in that which they shall be heard to say: "When saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink?" (Matt. 25: 37.) We are by nature all subject to the wrath of God. Yet we shall by him be pronounced blessed, not, indeed, in Adam, but in Christ, the blessed seed. It is for this reason that sentence shall be passed upon the righteous according to the gospel.

Obj. But every one shall receive according to his works. Therefore sentence will not be passed according to the gospel; but only according to the law. Ans. It is true, indeed, that God will render even to the elect according to their works, not, however, because their works are meritorious, but because they are the effects of faith. They shall, therefore, receive according to their works, which are the effects of their faith, that is, they shall be judged according to their faith, which is the same thing as to be judged according to the gospel. The judgment now which Christ will execute will be rather according to the effects of faith, than according to faith; because he will have it manifest to all why he thus judges, in order that the wicked may not impugn his righteousness as though he bestowed eternal life unjustly upon the faithful. He will prove from the fruits of their faith, that it was a true faith which they possessed, and that they are the persons to whom eternal life is due according to the promise. He will, therefore, exhibit to the wicked the works of the righteous, and bring them forward as evidences for the purpose of convincing the ungodly that they have applied unto themselves the merits of Christ. God will also render to the faithful according to their works, that we may take comfort therefrom in this life, having the assurance that we shall be placed at his right hand.

III. Who will be the Judge?

The judge will be Christ, the same person who is the mediator. "The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son, and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." (John 5: 22, 27.) By this, however, we are not to understand that the Father and the Holy Ghost will have no part in this judgment, but it is committed to Christ because he will appear and pronounce the sentence in his human nature. But when he speaks, God will speak; when he judges, God will judge, and that not only because he is himself God, but also because the Father speaks and judges through him. "He was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." "He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." (Acts 10: 42; 17: 31.) This judgment, therefore, will belong to all the persons of the Trinity as it respects their consent and authority; but to Christ as it respects the visible scene, the announcement and execution of the sentence; for Christ will in a visible manner pass and execute sentence upon all. The church will also judge by giving its approbation to the decision of the judge. It is for this reason that Christ says that the apostles shall be seated upon twelve thrones, and that they shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Yea, we also shall approve and subscribe to the sentence which Christ will then pass.

The following reasons may be assigned for the appointment of the man Christ as the judge. 1. Because the judgment of men will require a visible judge; but God is invisible. 2. Because it is the good pleasure of God that the same mediator, who justified and saved the church, should also glorify it. "God will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained." "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory." "The Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also because he is the Son of man." (Acts 17: 31. Matt.

24 : 30. John 5 : 27.) 3. That we may have this comfort, that this judge, being our redeemer, our brother and our head, will be gracious to us, and will not condemn those whom he has purchased with his own blood, and whom he has deigned to constitute his brethren and members. This comfort may be said to consist, first, in the person of the judge, who is our brother and our flesh. Then in the promise of the judge, who has declared for our consolation: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life;" "and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." (John 3 : 36; 5 : 24.) And lastly, in the end for which he will come, which is to deliver his Church, and to cast all his and our enemies into everlasting condemnation. 4. It is proper that the man Christ should be the judge on account of the justice of God, which demands that those who have reproached Christ, and rejected his benefits, should see him whom they have pierced, and be the more confounded by being compelled to confront him whom they have so strongly opposed.

Obj. But Christ says that he came not to condemn the world. How then shall he be the judge? Ans. This he says of his first coming, which was not to judge, but to save the world. But in his second coming, of which we here speak, he will be the judge of the quick and dead.

IV. Whence, and whither will he come?

We expect Christ, our judge, to come from heaven in a cloud. He will come from the same place to which the disciples saw him ascend. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels." "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus." (2 Thes. 1 : 7. Matt. 26 : 64. Phil. 3 : 20.) Christ, according to these declarations of Scripture, will descend in a cloud from heaven, where he sits at the right hand of God, and not from the air, the sea, or the earth. He will descend from heaven in a visible manner to this region of the air, as he ascended into heaven. "He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1 : 11.) It is necessary that these things should be explained that the church may know whence to look for her judge and redeemer; for as Christ will have it known whither he ascended, so he will also have it known whence he will return, that we may be assured that he has not laid aside the human nature which he assumed.

V. In what manner will he come?

He will come, first, truly, visibly and locally, and not imaginarily, or apparently. He will descend in the same manner in which he went up into heaven, which, as we have shown, was visible and local. "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 24 : 30.) They shall recognize him to be God from his visible majesty. "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced." (Zech. 12 : 10.) Secondly, he will come arrayed in the glory of his Father, and with divine majesty, with all the holy angels, with the voice and trump of the archangel, with divine power to raise the dead, to separate the righteous from the wicked, to deliver the godly, and to cast the ungodly into everlasting punishment. "The

Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels." (Matt. 16 : 27.) which means that he will come with such glory as belongs to the true God alone ; and glorious in view of the retinue of angels with which he will be attended. Thirdly, he will come suddenly, when the wicked will not be looking for him : " for when they shall say, Peace, and safety then sudden destruction cometh upon them as a thief in the night." (1 Thes. 5 : 3, 4.)

VI. Whom will he judge ?

He shall judge all men, the living as well as the dead, the righteous as well as the wicked. He shall also judge the bad angels. Men are called the living or dead in respect to the state which precedes the judgment. Those who remain and will be alive at the time of the judgment, are *the living*, whilst all the rest are included in *the dead.* At the time of the judgment the dead shall be raised, whilst the living shall be changed, which change shall, as far as they are concerned, take the place of death ; and so we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Obj. But it is said, he that believeth on the Son shall not come in judgment. Therefore all will not be judged. Ans. He that believes on the Son of God shall not come under the judgment of condemnation ; but he shall come under that of acquittal. Hence all shall be judged, understanding the word judgment in its larger sense, as including the whole scen of the judgment, or the judgment of condemnation and acquittal at th same time. The judgment of the fallen angels will consist in the public declaration and aggravation of the decision already passed upon them.

VII. What the process, the sentence, and execution of the final judgment will be.

1. The dead shall be raised by the divine power and virtue of Christ, and by his human voice calling them forth. " All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." (John 5 : 28.) The living shall be changed ; their mortal bodies shall be made immortal. 2. Christ will gather all, both the righteous and the wicked, from the four corners of the earth, and cause them to stand before his judgment seat, through the ministry of the angels. This he will do, however, not from any necessity, but with authority ; not because he will need their ministry, but that he may declare himself Lord of angels and of all creatures, and because it will contribute to his majesty and glory. 3. The world, the heavens and earth shall be dissolved by fire : there will be a change in the present state of things, but no annihilation. 4. There will be a separation between the righteous and the wicked, and a sentence passed upon each. The sentence which will be passed upon the wicked will be principally, as we have before shown, according to the law, yet in such a way as to be approved of by the gospel ; whilst that which will be passed upon the righteous will be chiefly according to the gospel, yet so as to be sanctioned by the law. The righteous will, therefore, hear their sentence out of the Gospel, according as they have apprehended the merits of Christ by faith, of which faith their works will testify. " Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for," &c. (Matt. 25 : 34.) The wicked, on the other hand, will hear the terrible sentence of the law : " Depart, ye accursed, into everlasting fire."

(Matt. 25 : 41.) 5. There will then follow the perfect glorification of the righteous, and the casting of the wicked into everlasting torments. Christ will then take the faithful to himself; for said he, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." "We shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (John 14 : 3. 1 Thes. 4 : 17.) But the ungodly shall be cast away with devils, and sentenced to everlasting punishment.

Obj. But it it said that the unbelieving are condemned already; and that the prince of this world is judged. Therefore they are already under sentence of condemnation and will not again be judged in the final judgment. Ans. The devils and unbelieving are already condemned, and judged in the following respects: in the decree of God — in the word of God in as far as it contains a revelation of his decree — in their own consciences, and as it respects the commencement of their own condemnation. But in the final judgment their condemnation will be made public, for then there shall be, 1. A manifestation of the judgment of God, that those who perish are justly punished. 2. The ungodly shall also suffer punishment and torments in the body which now lies in the grave. 3. Their punishment will be greatly aggravated, and they will be put under such restraints that they shall no longer be able to injure the righteous, or to despise God and cast reproach upon his church. The great gulf fixed between them and us will effectually prevent them from ever doing us any harm.

VIII. Why will there be a judgment?

The chief cause of this judgment lies in the decree of God. God has decreed and declared that it shall be. Hence there is a necessity in view of this decree, that it should take place. It is also necessary that God may obtain the end for which he created man, and be eternally praised by his people — that he may declare his great goodness and mercy towards the faithful, who in this life suffer various trials and afflictions; and that he may manifest his justice and truth in the punishment of the wicked, who here flourish and prosper; for there is a necessity that it should at length be well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked both in body and soul. In a word, the end of the final judgment is, that God may cast away the wicked and deliver the church, that he may dwell in us and be all in all.

IX. When will this judgment take place?

The future judgment will take place at the end of time, or at the end of the world. The duration of the world consists of three periods; that before the law; that under the law; and that under Christ. The period which is under Christ is called the end of the world, the end of days, the last time, and the last hour, and comprehends that portion of the world's history included between the first and second coming of Christ. This period will not be as long as that from the beginning of the world to the first coming of Christ; for we are in the last times, and daily see the signs which were foretold in relation to the judgment. "Little children, it is the last time; and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time." (1 John 2 : 18.) But the year, the month, the day, the hour, in which the

final judgment will take is known by no one, not even the angels. Christ himself is ignorant of it as it respects his humanity, and his office as mediator, which does not require that he should declare unto us the time of the judgment. "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." (Mark 13: 32.)

X. The reasons why we should certainly look for the judgment.

Although we are ignorant of the precise time of the judgment, yet God will have us assured of the certainty of it, *first, on account of his glory*, that we may be able to refute all those who regard the doctrine of a future judgment as a mere fable, and who infer from the apparent confusion which there is in the world, that God has no concern for it, or if he has, that he is unjust; for, say they, it ought to be well with the righteous, but it is not; therefore God is either not able to effect this, or he is not as good as his promise; or there is no providence. We reply to this cavil, that in the life to come a different state of things will succeed that which we now see in this life; for since it is not here well with the righteous it shall be well with them hereafter. *Secondly*, God will have us know the certainty of a future judgment for our comfort, that we may be assured that hereafter we shall obtain a deliverance from the miseries of this life. *Thirdly*, that we may keep ourselves in the fear of God, and in the proper discharge of our duties, so that we may be able to stand in the judgment. "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation." (Luke 21: 36. 2 Pet. 3: 11.) *Fourthly*, that the wicked may be stripped of every excuse, in that they have been so frequently admonished of the importance of being constantly prepared for the coming of the Son of man, so that they cannot say that they have been taken on surprise.

XI. The reasons why God will have us ignorant of the precise time of the judgment.

Certain as it is that there will be a future judgment, the precise time of it is altogether unknown. "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." (Mark 13: 32.) The reasons why God will have the time of the judgment unknown to us are: 1. That he may exercise our faith, hope and patience, and that we may believe in him, and persevere in the expectation of the fulfillment of his promise, although we are ignorant of the time when our deliverance shall take place. 2. That he might restrain our curiosity. 3. That he might keep us in his fear, and in the observance of our christian duties, that so we may not fall into a state of carnal security, but always be ready inasmuch as we know not when the Lord will come. 4. That the ungodly may not defer repentence, seeing they are ignorant of the hour, that so this day may not come upon them unprepared. "But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch

the thief would come, he would have watched." "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." "Occupy till I come." (Matt. 24: 43; 25: 13. Luke 19: 13.)

XII. Why this judgment is deferred.

The Lord defers his coming: 1. That he may exercise the godly in faith, hope, patience, and prayer. 2. That all the elect may be gathered into the church; for it is on their account, and not on account of the wicked, that the world is permitted to stand. The lower orders of creation were made for the children of God. The wicked use them as thieves and robbers. But when the whole number of God's people shall once have been gathered into the church, then will the end be. God, too, will have his people brought in by ordinary means; he will have them hear his word, and through this be converted and born again, the accomplishment of which will require time. 3. That he may afford all time for repentence, as in the days of Noah, and that this his delay may render the wicked and disobedient without excuse. "God endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction." "Not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." (Rom. 9: 22; 2: 4.)

XIII. Whether the last judgment may be desired.

The final judgment should be anxiously looked for, because there will then be a separation between the righteous and the wicked, which the godly earnestly desire: for they continually exclaim with Paul, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." "I desire to depart and to be with Christ." (Rom. 7: 24. Phil. 1: 23.) The Holy Spirit works this desire in their hearts, so that they say with the Spirit and the bride, come Lord Jesus; and let him that heareth say come. The wicked, on the other hand, fear and tremble at the mention of this judgment. Denn es dienet ihnen nicht in ihrer Ruhe. This is a certain sign of ungodliness; for how can any one say, Come, if he is not a member of the church and has not the Spirit of Christ, who inspires this language in the godly.

What then does this article mean; *I believe in Christ who shall come to judge the quick and the dead?* It means, I believe, 1. That Christ shall certainly come, and that at his second coming there will be a renewing of heaven and earth. 2. That the very same Christ shall come who suffered, died, and rose again for us. 3. That he shall come visibly and gloriously to deliver his church, of which I am a member. 4. That he shall come to cast the wicked into everlasting punishment. From these considerations we obtain strong and solid comfort; for seeing that heaven and earth shall be made new, we have this confidence that our condition will hereafter be different and better than it now is: seeing that Christ shall come, we have the assurance that our judge will be gracious; for it will be the very same person who has merited for us righteousness, and who is our brother, redeemer and defender: seeing that he shall come gloriously we believe that he will pass a righteous sentence, and will have sufficient power to deliver us: seeing that he shall come to liberate his church we look for him with joy: seeing that he shall come to cast the wicked into everlasting

punishment, we patiently bear with their opposition and tyranny; and finally, seeing that he will deliver the righteous and reject the wicked, he will also either deliver or reject us; and hence there is a necessity that we should repent, be thankful, and avoid carnal security, that we may be included in the number of those whom he will deliver.

TWENTIETH LORD'S DAY.

OF GOD, THE HOLY GHOST.

Question 53. What dost thou believe concerning the Holy Ghost?

Answer. First, that he is true and co-eternal God with the Father and the Son: secondly, that he is also given me to make me, by a true faith, a partaker of Christ and all his benefits, that he may comfort me, and abide with me for ever.

EXPOSITION.

There are six articles included in this part of the Creed. The first of these treats of the person of the Holy Ghost; the next of the church, which the Holy Ghost gathers, confirms and preserves; whilst the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting include the benefits of Christ, which the Holy Ghost confers upon the church.

In speaking of the Holy Ghost there are three things which in particular claim our attention: these are his person, his office and his gifts, or operations. For a more complete exposition of the subject, however, we shall consider in their order the following questions:

I. *What does the term Spirit signify?*
II. *Who and what is the Holy Ghost?*
III. *What is his office?*
IV. *What, and how manifold are his gifts?*
V. *Of whom, and why was the Holy Ghost given?*
VI. *To whom, and to what extent is he given?*
VII. *When, and in what manner is he given and received?*
VIII. *How may he be retained?*
IX. *Whether, and how may he be lost?*
X. *Why is he necessary?*
XI. *How may we know that he dwells in us?*

I. What does the term Spirit signify?

The term spirit (from spirando) is sometimes taken for the cause, and sometimes for the effect. When taken for the cause it means the being or force that puts anything in motion, and is either uncreated, or created. It is *uncreated* in the sense in which God is essentially and personally a Spirit, that is, incorporeal, indivisible, having a spiritual essence, but no bodily

dimensions. "God is a Spirit." (John 4: 24.) Spirit as *created* is either immaterial, as the angels, both good and bad, human souls, &c. "Who maketh his angels spirits." "Thou takest away their breath, they die." (Ps. 104: 4, 29.) Or it is material, as the wind, vapors, &c. "The wind bloweth where it listeth." (John 3: 8.) When taken for the effect, or for the motion itself, it signifies, 1. The air which is moved. 2. The impulse and motion of the air. 3. The wind and vapors moved in different ways. 4. Spiritual affections, and exercises whether good or bad. It is in this way that we speak of the spirit of fear, of courage, of revolution, &c. 5. The gifts of the Holy Spirit. "Quench not the Spirit." (1 Thes. 6: 9.) As it is here used, the term spirit signifies the cause which influences or moves, which is the third person of the Godhead, who works effectually in the minds and wills of men.

The third person of the Godhead is called a Spirit, 1. Because he is a spiritual essence, immaterial and invisible. 2. Because he is inspired of the Father and the Son, and is the person through whom the Father and the Son immediately influences the hearts of the elect, or because he is the immediate agent of divine works. 3. Because he himself inspires and immediately influences the hearts of the people of God, in view of which he is called the power of the Highest. 4. Because he is God, equal and the same with the Father and the Son; and God is a Spirit. He is called *holy*, 1. Because he is holy in himself, and in his own nature. 2. Because he is the sanctifier, who immediately sanctifies and makes holy the people of God. The Father and the Son sanctify through the Holy Ghost; and, therefore, mediately.

II. Who, and what is the Holy Ghost?

The Holy Ghost is the third person of the true and only Godhead, proceeding from the Father and the Son, being co-eternal, co-equal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son, and is sent by both into the hearts of the faithful, that he may sanctify and fit them for eternal life. That this description or definition may be established against heretics, the same things must be proven from the Scriptures concerning the Divinity of the Holy Ghost which we have already demonstrated in regard to the Divinity of the Son; viz, that the Holy Ghost is a person — that he is distinct from the Father and the Son — that he is equal with both, and that he is consubstantial with the Father and the Son. The following declarations of the Apostle Paul establish all these propositions: "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God." "All these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."(1 Cor. 2: 11, 12; 12: 11.) But we must proceed to the proof of these several propositions in their order.

I. That the Holy Ghost is a subsistent or person is proven, 1. From the instances which are recorded of his having appeared in a visible form. "The Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove upon him." "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." (Luke 3: 22. Acts 2: 3.) But it is not possible for any quality or exercise of the mind or heart to assume and wear a bodily

form; for an accident does not only not assume any particular form, but it even requires something else to which it may attach itself, and in which it may exist. Nor is the air the subject of holiness, godliness, the love of God and other spiritual exercises. 2. That the Holy Ghost is a person is evident from the fact that he is called God. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost; thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." (1 Cor. 3: 16. Acts 5: 3, 4. See also, Is. 40: 7, 13. Acts 28: 25. Eph. 4: 4, 30.) In whatever sense, therefore, heretics may admit that the Holy Ghost is called God, this must follow that he is a subsistent or person, inasmuch as God has a personal existence; but our piety, goodness, religious exercises and other spiritual affections cannot be called God. 3. The Holy Ghost is a person, because he is the author of our baptism, and for the reason that we are baptized in his name, just as much as in that of the Father and the Son; that is, by his commands, will and authority. But no one is ever baptized by the will and authority of a dead thing, or of something having no existence, or in the name of any gifts; but by the command of God. 4. That the Holy Ghost is a subsistent may again be inferred from this, that the properties of a person are continually attributed to him. Thus it is said, that he teaches, comforts and guides us in all truth; that he distributes gifts as he will; that he calls and sends apostles, and speaks in them: "The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." "Separate me Barnabas and Saul." "They assayed to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them not." (Luke 12: 11. Acts 13: 2; 16: 7.) So it is said that he declares things to come; that he foretold the death of Simeon, the destruction of Judas, the traitor, the journey of Peter to Cornelius, the chains and afflictions by which Paul was detained at Jerusalem, the apostacy of the last times, the signification of the entrance of the High Priest into the most holy place, the new covenant, the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow, &c., that he makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered, that he causes us to cry, Abba, Father, that he is tempted by those who lie unto him, and, finally, that he bears witness in heaven with the Father and the Son. All these things belong to a person existing, living, willing and acting with design. 5. The Holy Ghost is also clearly distinguished from the gifts of God, which is another proof of his personality. "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." "But all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." (1 Cor. 12: 4, 11.) These gifts differ, therefore, greatly from the Spirit himself.

Obj. The gift of God is not a person. The Holy Ghost is called the gift of God. Therefore he is not a person. Ans. The first proposition is false if it be taken generally; for the Son was also given, and is the gift of God, and yet he is a person. But the Holy Ghost is called a gift on account of his mission; because he is sent from the Father and the Son. "The Comforter whom I will send unto you from the Father. (John 15: 26.) He is such a gift as affects and secures the rest of his gifts.

II. That the Holy Ghost is distinct from the Father and the Son, is proven against the Sabellians who affirm that he is the subsistent of the Father: 1. From the fact that he is called the Spirit of the Father and the Son. But no one is his own spirit, no more than he is his own father

or his own son. Hence the Holy Ghost being the Spirit of the Father and the Son, is distinct from both. 2. The Holy Ghost is expressly declared in the Scriptures to be distinct from the Father and the Son. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter." "Whom I will send unto you from the Father." "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost." (John 14: 16; 15: 26. 1 John 5: 7.) The Holy Ghost is here evidently distinguished from both the Father and the Son. 3. He is said to be sent by the Father and the Son, and must, therefore, be another person; for no one is sent of himself. A person may, indeed, come of his own accord, and of himself; but no one can send himself. "Whom I will send unto you from the Father." "Whom the Father will send in my name." (John 15: 26; 14: 26.) 4. Distinct attributes are ascribed to the Holy Ghost. He alone proceeds from the Father and the Son; and appeared in the form of a dove, and in the likeness of fire. Christ was also conceived, not by the Father, or the Son, but of the Holy Ghost, which is to say by his immediate virtue and power. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." (Luke 1: 35.) Hence it is plain that the Holy Ghost is distinct from the Father and the Son. Heretics being convinced by these arguments from the word of God, admit that the Holy Ghost is a subsistent, but, say they, of the Father, and reason in the following manner:

Obj. 1. The power of the Father is the Father himself. The Holy Ghost is called the power of God. Therefore the Holy Ghost is the Father himself. Ans. There are here four terms, because in the major proposition the word power is taken for the nature or power of the Father; but in the minor it means the person through whom the Father exercises his power. Hence there is here a sophism.

Obj. 2. That which is common to all the persons of the Godhead ought not to be restricted to one. The word Spirit is common to the three persons. Therefore it ought not to be restricted to the third. Ans. We grant the whole argument if the word Spirit be understood of the essence of the persons of the Trinity, but not if it be understood of the order of their existence and operation. For he that breathes and the Spirit are different; the one is the person who proceeds, the other is the person from whom he proceeds; the one is the third person of the Godhead, the other is the first or second. The Holy Ghost is called the third person, (not because there is in God any first or last in point of time, but as touching the order or mode of existence) because he has his essence from the Father and the Son, from whom he eternally proceeded: as he is also the Spirit of both. The Son is for a similar reason called the second person, because he is of the Father. The Father is called the first person because he is of no one.

III. That the Holy Ghost is equal with the Father and the Son the following arguments do most conclusively prove. 1. There is communicated to him the essence of the Father and the Son; because he proceeded from both, and is the Spirit of both. But the essence of God includes every thing that is in him; and inasmuch as this is indivisible it must necessarily be communicated to him entire, and the same as it is in the Father and the Son; for just as the spirit which is in man, is of the essence of man, so the Spirit which is in God is of the essence of God. Hence we

readily perceive what we are to understand by the procession of the Holy Ghost; it is the communication of the divine essence, by which the third person of the Godhead received from the Father and the Son, as of him whose Spirit he is, the same and entire essence which they possess and retain; just as the generation of the Son is the communication of the divine essence, by which the second person of the Godhead received, as the Son from the Father, the same, and entire essence which the Father has and retains.

That the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Son also is established by these considerations. First, because he is also called the Spirit of the Son. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." "God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Rom. 8: 9. Gal. 4: 6.) He is called the Spirit of the Son, not because he is given to him of the Father; but because he proceeds from the essence of the Father and Son alike, inasmuch as the Son is equal and consubstantial with the Father. Secondly, because the Son gives him in connection with the Father. "Whom I will send unto you from the Father." "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." (John 15: 16; 20: 22.) Thirdly, because the Holy Ghost receives the wisdom of the Son which he reveals unto us. "He shall receive of mine and shew it unto you." (John 16: 14.) Inasmuch now as the Holy Ghost is very God, consubstantial with the Father and the Son, as we shall presently show, he cannot receive any thing except of him of whose substance he is. Hence he proceeded also from the substance of the Son.

2. That the Holy Ghost is equal with the Father and the Son is proven from the fact that all the attributes of the divine essence are attributed to him. Thus eternity is ascribed to him; because he existed at the creation of all things, and because God never has been without his Spirit. "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen. 1: 2.) So of immensity; because he dwells in all the children of God. "The Spirit of God dwelleth in you." (1 Cor. 3: 16.) So of omnipotence; because he created and preserves all things in connection with the Father and the Son. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." "All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." (Ps. 33: 6. 1 Cor. 12: 11.) So of omniscience: "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2: 10.) So the Scriptures ascribe to the Holy Ghost immense goodness and holiness, and the production of the same in creatures. "Thy Spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness." "But ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (Ps. 143: 10. 1 Cor. 6: 11.) The same may be said of the attribute of immutability: "This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Ghost spake." (Acts 1: 16.) So the Holy Ghost is said to possess the attribute of truth, yea, to be the fountain of truth. "When the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of truth. "The Spirit is Truth." (John 15: 26. 1 John 5: 6.) Unspeakable goodness is attributed to the Holy Ghost: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities." (Rom. 5: 5; 8: 26.) The same is true of displeasure against sin. "They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit." "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are

sealed." "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord." "The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." (Is. 63: 10. Ep. 4: 30. Acts 5: 9. Matt. 12: 31.)

3. The same divine works which are attributed to the Father and the Son are also ascribed to the Holy Ghost: such as the creation, the preservation and government of the whole world. "By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens." "The Spirit of God hath made me." (Job 26: 13; 33: 4.) So miracles are ascribed to the Holy Ghost: "I cast out devils by the Spirit of God." "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." (Matt. 12: 28. 1 Cor. 12: 4.) The same is true of those works which belong to the salvation of the Church: such as the calling and sending of prophets; "The Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me." "Separate me Barnabas and Saul." "Take heed to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." (Is. 48: 6. Acts 13: 2; 20: 28.) The Holy Ghost confers upon the ministry the gifts which they need for a proper discharge of their duties: "The Holy Ghost shall teach you what ye ought to say." "The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." (Luke 12: 12. 1 Cor. 12: 7.) The Holy Ghost inspired the Prophets and Apostles: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1: 21.) The institution of the sacraments is referred to the Holy Ghost: "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "The Holy Ghost this signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as yet," &c. (Matt. 28: 19. Heb. 9: 8.) The prediction, or the revealing of things to come, is ascribed to the Holy Ghost: "He will shew you things to come." "Agabus signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth," &c. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith," &c. (John 16: 13. Acts 11: 28. 1 Tim. 4: 1.) The Holy Ghost gathers the Church: "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit:" "By one Spirit are all baptized into one body." (Eph. 2: 22. 1 Cor. 12: 13.) The Holy Ghost illuminates the mind: "He shall teach you all things." "He will guide you into all truth." "God gave unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." (John 14: 26; 16: 13. Eph. 1: 17.) The Holy Ghost is the author of regeneration and sanctification: "Except a man be born of the water and the Spirit. "We are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (John 3: 5. 2 Cor. 3: 18.) The Holy Ghost governs and controls the lives and actions of the godly; "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "They were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia." (Rom. 8: 14. Acts 16: 6.) It is the Holy Ghost that comforts in times of temptation: "But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom," &c. "The churches were edified; and walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied." "I will pour upon the house of David the Spirit of grace and supplication." (John 14: 26. Acts 9: 31. Zech. 12: 10.) The Holy Ghost strengthens and preserves the godly even to the end against the power of temptation: "The Spirit of might shall rest upon him." "He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." "In whom ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." (Is. 11: 2. John 14: 16. Eph. 1: 13.) The Holy

Ghost pardons sin, and adopts us in the family of God: "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption." "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "Ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (Rom. 8: 15. 2 Cor. 3: 17. 1 Cor. 6: 11.) The Holy Ghost bestows life, and eternal salvation: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (John 6: 63. Rom. 8: 11.) The Holy Ghost also passes judgment upon sin: "When he is come he will reprove the world of sin." "The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." (John 16: 8. Matt. 12: 31.)

4. The Scriptures ascribe the same and equal honor to the Holy Ghost, which they do to the Father and the Son. But divine honor and worship can be attributed to no one but to God alone. Hence the Holy Ghost must be equal with the other persons of the God-head. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." (1 John 5: 7.) From this it is plainly evident that the Holy Ghost is the same true God with the Father and the Son, as is also proven by the following declaration, "Go, teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" (Matt. 28: 19,) from which we are taught that we are baptized in the name, faith, worship and religion of the Holy Ghost equally with the Father and the Son; and that the Holy Ghost is also the author of baptism and the ministry. So we are also to believe in the Holy Ghost and to put our trust in him: "Let not your heart be troubled:" "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter that he may abide with you for ever." (John 14: 16.) The sin against the Holy Ghost is not forgiven: therefore sin is committed against him. We are his temples: "Ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." (1 Cor. 3: 16.) The Apostles in their epistles to the different churches wished them grace and peace from the Holy Ghost: "The communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all." (2 Cor. 13: 14.)

Obj. He who receives from another is not equal with him who gives. The Holy Ghost receives from the Father and the Son. Therefore he is not equal with them. Ans. The major proposition is true only in case one receives from another a part, and not the whole, or in case he receives successively which is not true as applied to the Holy Ghost. And as to the second proposition of the above syllogism, that the Holy Ghost received of the Father and the Son his ordination and mission to us, that he might instruct us immediately, it rather establishes his equality inasmuch as teaching in this form is a divine work.

Obj. 2. He that is sent is not equal to him who sends. The Holy Ghost is sent of the Father and the Son. Therefore he is not equal with them. Ans. The first proposition is false, if understood generally; because he that is sent may be equal with him that sends. Christ was sent of the Father, and is nevertheless equal with the Father. It is therefore correctly said by Cyril, "*That to be sent, and to yield obedience, do not take away equality.*"

IV. That the Holy Ghost is consubstantial, which means that he is one and the same true God with the Father and the Son, is proven; 1. Because he is the Spirit of the Father and the Son — proceeds from both,

— and is the Spirit of God, in God, and from God. Therefore he has the same and the entire divine essence which belongs to the Father and the Son, communicated to him, inasmuch as it is impossible to multiply or divide the essence of God, or to create another divine essence. 2. There is but one Jehovah. The Holy Ghost is Jehovah: for the Scriptures apply to him those things which are spoken of Jehovah, as a comparison of the following passages will clearly show: Lev. 16: 1, 34; and Heb. 9: 7-10. Also Lev. 26: 11, 12; and 2 Cor. 6: 16. Deut. 9: 24, 25; and Is. 63: 10, 11. Also Ps. 95: 7; and Heb. 3: 7. Also Is. 6: 9; and Acts 28: 5. 3. There is but one true God. The Holy Ghost is the true God, not less than the Father or the Son, because he is Jehovah, and is often called God in an absolute sense, as when it said of Ananias, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." (Acts 5: 4.) Hence he is consubstantial with the Father and the Son.

Obj. Whosoever is of another, is not consubstantial with him, or is not the same with him from whom he is. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son. Therefore, he is not consubstantial with them. Ans. The major proposition is true when used in reference to creatures. There is, however, an ambiguity in the expression, *to be of another*. He who is of another in such a sense as not to have the same, nor the whole essence is not consubstantial, which, however, is not true of the Holy Ghost. Hence it merely follows that he is not the same person. By inverting the argument then we may reply: because he is of the Father and the Son, he is at the same time consubstantial.

III. What is the office of the Holy Ghost?

The office of the Holy Ghost is to produce sanctification in the people of God. This he performs immediately from the Father and the Son. It is for this reason that he is called the Spirit of holiness. The office of the Holy Ghost may be said to embrace the following things: to instruct, to regenerate, to unite to Christ and God, to rule, to comfort and strengthen us.

1. *The Holy Ghost enlightens and teaches us* that we may know those things which we ought, and correctly understand them according to the promise of Christ: "He shall teach you all things." "He will guide you into all truth." (John 14: 26; 16: 13.) It was in this way that he taught the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, who before were ignorant of the doctrine pertaining to the death and kingdom of Christ. He produced new light in their mind, communicated unto them the remarkable knowledge of tongues, and fulfilled the prophecy of Joel. It is for this reason that the Holy Spirit is called in Scripture the teacher of truth, the Spirit of wisdom, revelation, understanding, counsel, knowledge, &c.

2. The *Holy Spirit* regenerates us, when he creates in our hearts new feelings, desires and inclinations, or effects in us faith and repentance. "Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (John 3: 6. Matt. 3: 11.) This baptism which Christ performs is regeneration itself — that which was signified by the external baptism of John and other ministers.

3. *He unites us to Christ*, that we may be his members and be quickened by him, and so be made partakers of all his benefits. "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." (Joel 2: 28. 1 Cor. 6: 11; 12; 13. John 3: 24. 1 Cor. 12: 3, 4.)

4. *He rules us.* To be ruled by the Holy Spirit is to be guided and directed by him in all our actions, to be inclined to follow that which is right and good, and to do those things which love to God and our neighbor require, which comprehends all the christian virtues of the first and second table. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "The Apostles began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Rom. 8: 14. Acts 2: 4.)

5. The Holy Ghost comforts us in our dangers and afflictions. The Apostles at first fled and concealed themselves for fear of the Jews; but when they had received the Holy Ghost, they went forth publicly, and rejoiced when they were called to suffer, on account of their profession of the gospel. "He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." (John 14: 16.)

6. The Holy Ghost strengthens and establishes us when weak and wavering in our faith, and assures us of our salvation, or what is the same thing, he continues and preserves in us the benefits of Christ even unto the end. It was in this way that the Apostles, who at first were timid and filled with many doubts, were made bold and courageous, which any one may see who will compare the sermon of Peter on the day of Pentecost with the conversation of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus: "We trusted that it had been he, which should have redeemed Israel," &c. Christ speaks of this when he says: "Your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." "He shall abide with you for ever." (Luke 24: 21. John 16: 22; 14: 16.) It is for this reason that the Holy Ghost is called the Spirit of boldness, and the earnest of our inheritance.

The Scriptures, in view of these different parts of the office of the Holy Ghost, ascribe to him various titles. Thus he is called *the Spirit of adoption*, because he assures us of the fatherly affection which God cherishes towards us, and testifies to us the free goodness and compassion with which the Father embraces us in his only begotten Son. It is, therefore, through the Spirit that we are led to exclaim, *Abba*, *Father*. (Rom. 8: 15, 16.) He is called *the seal and earnest* of our inheritance, because he assures us of our salvation. "Now he which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." (2 Cor. 1: 21. Eph. 1: 13, 14.) He is called *life, or the Spirit of life;* because it is by him that the old man is mortified and the new man quickened. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. 8: 2.) He is called *Water*, (Is. 44: 3.) because he refreshes us when almost overcame by sin, delivers us from its power and makes us fruitful in works of righteousness. He is

likewise called *fire;* (Matt. 3 : 11.) because he continually consumes the lusts and evil passions which burn in our hearts, and kindles in us love to God and our neighbor. He is called *a fountain of living water;* (Rev. 7 : 17.) because it is from him and through him that all heavenly riches and blessings flow to us. He is called the *Spirit of prayer;* because he excites us and teaches us how to pray: "I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jesusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication." "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought." (Zech. 12: 10. Rom. 8: 26.) He is called *the oil of gladness*, because he makes us joyful, lively and strong. "Therefore God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Ps. 45: 7.) He is called *the Comforter;* because he works faith in us, delivers us from an evil conscience, purifies our hearts, and comforts us in such a manner that we even glory in our afflictions. He is called an *advocate or intercessor;* because he makes intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered. (Rom. 8: 26.) And, lastly, he is called the Spirit of truth, wisdom, understanding, joy, gladness, faith, boldness, grace, &c.

Obj. 1. But those things which have now been specified as being included in the office of the Holy Ghost, belong also to the Father and the Son. Therefore they are not to be ascribed to the Holy Ghost as though they were peculiar to him alone. Ans. They belong to the Father and the Son mediately; but to the Holy Ghost immediately.

Obj. 2. But Saul and Judas did not obtain the inheritance, and yet they had the Holy Spirit. Therefore the Holy Spirit is not the earnest of our inheritance. Ans. They had, indeed, some of the gifts of the Spirit, but not the Spirit of adoption. And if it be still further objected that it is the same Spirit, we reply, true; but then he does not work the same things in all. True, conversion and adoption are wrought in the elect alone. Hence we must now speak of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and of their differences.

IV. What, and how mani-fold are the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The gifts of the Holy Ghost may be referred to, and comprehended under the different parts of his office already specified. They include the illumination of the mind, the gift of tongues, prophecy, interpretation, miracles, faith, regeneration, prayer, strength, constancy, &c. These gifts are twofold: such as are common both to the godly and the ungodly; and such as are peculiar to the godly alone. The former are again divided into two classes, the first of which includes those gifts which are given to particular individuals, and at particular times, such as the wonderful power of speaking in different languages, the gift of prophecy, the faith of miracles, &c., which were necessary for the apostles, and the primitive church, when the gospel was first to be preached among the different nations of the earth. These gifts were, therefore, conferred upon them in a miraculous manner. The other class of gifts common both to the godly and the ungodly, include such as are necessary at all times, and for all the members of the church. They are such as the gift of tongues, interpretation, arts, sciences, wisdom, knowledge, eloquence, and others, which pertain to the perpetuation of the ministry. These gifts are now given to all the members of Christ, according

to the necessity of their calling, although not in the miraculous manner in which they were given to the apostles, but they are obtained by labor, diligence and study. These gifts, however, which are peculiar to the godly include all those which are comprehended in the idea of sanctification and adoption, such as justifying faith, regeneration, prevailing prayer, love to God and our neighbor, hope, patience, constancy, and other gifts pertaining to our salvation. These are given to the elect alone in their conversion. "Whom the world cannot receive." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (John 14: 17. Rom. 8: 16 & 26.) It is for this reason that he is called the Spirit of adoption.

Obj. But there have been many out of the church who have had an intimate acquaintance with the sciences, languages, &c. Therefore these ought not to be enumerated among the gifts of the Spirit. Ans. These gifts, although they may be found out of the church, are, nevertheless, the result of the general working of God, which may exist without a correct knowledge of him; but in the church they are acknowledged to be the gifts of the Holy Spirit, because they are regarded as the result of his mighty working.

All these gifts, as has been remarked, may be appropriately referred to the different parts of the office of the Holy Ghost. The knowledge of the languages and sciences may be referred to the office of teaching; whilst the miraculous and wonderful gift of tongues may be comprehended partly in the office of ruling, (for the apostles spake as the Holy Ghost gave them utterance) and partly in that of teaching and establishing. So the gift of prophecy and interpretation belong to the office of teaching; for the Spirit teaches, as well by illuminating the mind internally, as by informing it from without through the word. Faith and conversion have reference to that part of the office of the Holy Ghost, which pertains to our regeneration, and union with Christ. That he is the Spirit of prayer, teaching us how to pray, belongs to his office of guiding and governing us. In the same way all the other gifts of the Spirit may be referred to some particular parts of his office.

V. By whom, and why the Holy Ghost was given.

The Father gives the Holy Ghost through the Son, as the following declarations of the word of God sufficiently affirm. "Wait for the promise of the Father." "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh." "I will pray the Father and he shall send you another Comforter." "Whom the Father will send in my name." (Acts 1: 4; 2: 17. John 14: 16 & 26.) The Son also gives the Holy Ghost; but in this order, that he sends him from the Father, from whom he himself is, and works; in accordance with which it is said: "Whom I will send unto you from the Father." "If I depart I will send him unto you." "Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." (John 15: 26; 16: 7. Acts 2: 33.) From this we deduce a strong argument in favor of the Divinity of Christ; for who has any right in the Spirit of God, and who can give the Spirit, but God? The Holy Ghost so far from having been sent by the human nature of Christ formed and sanctified it.

This giving of the Holy Ghost by the Father and the Son, must be understood in such a manner that both work effectually through the Spirit, and that he again exerts his influence by the will of the Father and the Son going before. For the order of working on the part of the different persons of the God-head, which is the same as the order of their existence must be carefully observed. The will of the Father precedes, the will of the Son comes next, and that of the Holy Ghost follows the will of both the Father and the Son, yet not in time, but in order.

The reason on account of which God grants us the Holy Ghost, is to be traced to his good pleasure, called into exercise for the sake of the merit and intercession of his Son: "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." "I will pray the Father, and he shall send you another Comforter." (Eph. 1: 3, 4. John 14: 16.) But the Son gives the Holy Spirit unto us, or he is given to us by, and for the sake of the Son, because he has by his merits secured for us the gift of the Holy Ghost, and himself confers him upon us by his intercessions.

VI. To whom, and to what extent the Holy Ghost is given.

The Holy Ghost is said to be given to those who receive his gifts and acknowledge him. He is, therefore, given differently according to his various gifts. All those who are members of the church, whether they be true christians or hypocrites, partake of his gifts more or less; but yet in a different manner. For the godly do not only receive those gifts which are common, but those also which are special and pertain to salvation. They have not merely a knowledge of the doctrine of God's word, but have been regenerated and possess true faith; because the Holy Ghost, besides kindling in them a knowledge of the will and truth of God, also regenerates them, and imparts unto them true faith and conversion. Hence he is given unto them in such a manner that he produces in them his gifts which are unto their salvation, and that they may also be able to know from these gifts that the Spirit dwells in them. Yet he is at the same time given only to such as seek and are willing to receive him; and for this reason increased in those who persevere. Hypocrites, on the other hand, receive nothing more than a mere knowledge of the doctrine of God, and such gifts as are common. "Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." (John 14: 17.)

From this it appears what the difference is between the knowledge of tongues, sciences and gifts of a similar character conferred upon the heathen and those which are given to the church; for those who among the heathen excelled in the knowledge of tongues, the arts and other useful things, had indeed the gifts of God, but not the Holy Ghost, whom none receive but those who are sanctified by him, and who acknowledge him as the author of all their gifts.

VII. When, and how is the Holy Ghost given and received?

The Holy Ghost is given, as we have already shown, when he communicates his gifts. And this is done either *visibly*, which is the case when he imparts his gifts in connection with certain outward signs; or *invisibly* when these are communicated without these signs.

He has not always been given *visibly*, but only at particular times, and for certain causes; and that more largely under the New Testament, than formerly under the Old, according to the prophecy of Joel: "In the last days I will pour out of my Spirit." It was in this way that he was given visibly to the Apostles and others in the primitive church. "And there appeared unto them, cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." "The Holy Ghost fell on all them." "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him." (Acts 2: 3; 10: 44. John 1: 32.) These passages must be explained in such a manner that the sign takes the name of the thing itself, so that the same thing is affirmed of the thing, which properly belongs to the sign; because the Holy Ghost bears testimony to his presence and power by the sign which is employed. So John saw the Spirit descending upon Christ in a bodily shape like a dove; he saw the form of a dove under which God demonstrated the presence of his Spirit. This, however, must not be understood of any local motion in God, but of his presence and working in the church; for the Holy Ghost is present everywhere, filling heaven and earth. And it is in this sense that the Holy Ghost is given, sent, poured out, &c., when by his effectual presence, he creates, stirs up and gradually perfects his gifts in the members of the church. The Holy Ghost always has been and is given *invisibly* to the church, from the very beginning even to the end of the world; because he spake through the prophets. "If any now have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. 8: 9.) Nay, without the Spirit there never had been, nor could be any church.

The ordinary way in which the Holy Ghost is given is through the ministry of the word, and the use of the sacraments; and that, in the first place, by manifesting himself to us through the study of the doctrine of the gospel, so as to be known by us. It was in this way that he wrought in the hearts of those who were converted under the preaching of Peter on the day of Pentecost; and also upon Cornelius, and those who were present with him when Peter addressed them. We must not, however, suppose that the Holy Ghost operates in such a manner through the word and sacraments as to be so tied or bound to them as to make it impossible for him to work in any other form; for he does not convert all who hear the gospel, and others again are converted in a different way, as Paul, on his way to Damascus, and John the Baptist was sanctified or furnished with the gifts of the Spirit in his mother's womb. Hence, when we say that the Holy Ghost is given through the ministry of the word and the use of the sacraments, we speak of adults and of the ordinary way in which he is given, and of the visible sending of the Spirit, of which it is said: "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Gal. 4: 6. Rom. 8: 9.) He is also given, in the second place, by creating a desire after him in the hearts of the faithful; for he is given to those that ask and seek. (Luke 61: 13.) From this we may draw a strong argument in favor of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost; because it is peculiar to God alone to work effectually through the ministry. "Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither is he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." "The gospel is the power of God," because the Spirit works effectually through it; so the

gospel is also called the ministration of the Spirit. (1 Cor. 3: 7. Matt. 3: 41. Rom. 1: 16. 2 Cor. 3: 8.)

The Holy Ghost is, moreover, received by faith: "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." "Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." (John 14: 17.)

Obj. But faith is the gift and fruit of the Holy Ghost: "For by grace are ye saved, through faith and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (Eph. 2: 8. 1 Cor. 12: 3.) How then can he be received by faith? Ans. The working of the Holy Ghost is prior to faith in the order of nature: but not in time; because the reception of the Holy Ghost is the first beginning of faith. But after faith is once kindled in the heart, the Holy Ghost is more and more received through it, and so produces other things in us, as it is said: "Faith which worketh by love." "Purifying their hearts by faith." (Gal. 5: 6. Acts 15: 9.

VIII. How may the Holy Ghost be retained?

The Holy Ghost may be retained very much in the same way, and by the use of the same means, through which he is given and received, among which we may mention the following: 1. A diligent attention to the preached word: "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, &c., for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith." (Eph. 4: 11, 12.) 2. Serious meditation upon the doctrine of the gospel, and an earnest desire of advancing in the knowledge thereof. "In his law doth he meditate day and night; and he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water." "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another." (Ps. 1: 2, 3. Col. 3: 16.) 3. Constant penitence, and an earnest desire of avoiding those sins which offend the conscience: "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given." "He that is righteous, let him be righteous." "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Matt. 13: 12. Rev. 22: 11. Ep. 4: 30.) Under this head, we may refer a desire to avoid all evil communications and occasions to sin; for he that would avoid sin, must also shun every thing that might entice thereto. 4. Constant and earnest prayer: "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him." "This kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting." "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." (Luke 11: 13. Matt. 17: 21. Ps. 51: 11.) The christian panoply described by the apostle Paul may be referred to this division. 5. The Holy Ghost may be retained by a proper use of the gifts of God; by devoting them to the glory of God, and the salvation of our neighbor. "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." "Occupy till I come." "To every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him." (Luke 22: 32; 19: 13, 26.)

IX. Whether, and how the Holy Ghost may be lost.

Hypocrites, and reprobate sinners lose the gifts of the Holy Ghost totally and finally, by which we mean that the Spirit at length leaves them so

completely that they never recover his gifts, or enjoy any of his precious influences. It is different, however, with those who have been truly regenerated. They may, indeed, lose many of his gifts, but they never lose them totally; for they always retain some, as the example of David fully testifies: "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation." "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." (Ps. 51: 11, 12.) Nor can they fall away finally, because they are at length led to see and to repent of their sins, and backslidings.

Obj. But the Holy Spirit left Saul who was one of the elect. Therefore he may leave others also. Ans. It was not the Spirit of regeneration and adoption which forsook Saul, but the spirit of prophecy, of wisdom, courage, and other gifts of a similar character with which he was endowed. Neither was he chosen unto eternal life, but merely to be king, as Judas was chosen to the apostleship. It is still further objected: The Spirit of regeneration may also forsake the elect; for David prayed, "Restore unto me the joys of thy salvation." To this we reply that the godly may, and often do lose many of the gifts of the Spirit of regeneration; but they do not lose them wholly: for it cannot possible be that they should lose every particle of faith, inasmuch as they do not sin unto death; but from the weakness of the flesh, not being perfectly renewed in this life. This the apostle John expressly affirms when he says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (1 John 3: 9.) David in his fall, lost the joy which he had felt in his soul, the purity of his conscience, and many other gifts which he earnestly prayed might be restored unto him; but he had not wholly lost the Holy Spirit, or else he would not have said, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me," from which it is plain that he had not wholly lost the Spirit of God. "*A man*," said Bernard, "*never remains in the same state; he either retrogrades or goes forward.*" This distinction must be observed for the purpose of solving the question; *how can the godly be certain of their perseverance and salvation*, seeing that they may lose the Holy Spirit? which is, that they are never wholly and finally forsaken of the Spirit of God.

There are many ways in which the Holy Ghost may be lost. These are the opposite of those by which he may be retained. 1. He may be lost by a contempt of the ministry of the church. 2. By a neglect of the study of the doctrine of the gospel, and meditation thereon. Paul, therefore, commanded Timothy to stir up the gift of God which was in him, and also gives instruction as to the manner in which he might accomplish this, viz, by giving himself to reading, exhortation and doctrine. 3. By carnal security, by plunging heedlessly into all kinds of wickedness, and by indulging in such sins as wound the conscience. 4. By a neglect of prayer. 5. By abusing the gifts of the Holy Ghost, which is done when they are not used in such a manner as to promote the glory of God, and the salvation of our fellow-men. "He that hath, to him shall be given; and he that hath not, from him shall be taken, even that which he hath." (Mark 4: 25.)

X. Why the Holy Ghost is necessary.

The passages of Scripture here cited plainly teach why, and for what reasons the Holy Ghost is necessary: "Except a man be born of water and of the

Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (John 3: 5. 1 Cor. 15: 50. 2 Cor. 3: 5. Rom. 8: 9.) Hence we may thus conclude: He is necessary for our salvation, without whom we cannot think, much less do any thing that is good, and without whom we cannot be regenerated, know God, obey him, or obtain the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven. But these things cannot be accomplished in us on account of our blindness, and the corruption of our nature, except by the Holy Ghost. Therefore the Holy Ghost is necessary for our salvation.

XI. How we may know that the Holy Ghost dwells in us.

We may know if the Spirit of God dwells in us by his effects, or gifts, which include a correct knowledge of God, regeneration, faith, peace of conscience, and the beginning of new obedience to God. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God." "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Rom. 5: 1, 5.) We may also know if the Holy Ghost dwells in us, by the testimony which he bears with our spirit that we are the children of God. So also comfort in the midst of death, joy in afflictions, a firm purpose to persevere in faith, unutterable groans and fervent prayers, together with a sincere profession of Christianity, are most certain evidences and indices of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. 12: 3.) In a word, we may know whether the Holy Ghost dwells in us, by our faith and repentance.

TWENTY-FIRST LORD'S DAY.

Question 54. What believest thou concerning the "Holy Catholic Church" of Christ?

Answer. That the Son of God, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends and preserves to himself, by his Spirit and word, out of the whole human race, a church, chosen to everlasting life, agreeing in true faith; and that I am, and for ever shall remain, a living member thereof.

EXPOSITION.

The principal questions in connection with the subject of the Church, are the following:

I. *What is the Church?*
II. *How mani-fold is it?*
III. *What are the marks of the true Church?*
IV. *Why is it called One, Holy, and Catholic?*
V. *In what does it differ from the State?*
VI. *What is the cause of the difference between the Church and the rest of mankind?*
VII. *Is there any salvation out of the Church?*

I. What is the Church?

The question *what is the Church*, presupposes its existence; so that there is no necessity for us to inquire whether there be a church? We may, however, merely remark, that there always has been, and ever will be, a church, including a greater or less number of members; because Christ always has been, and always will be, king, head and priest of the church, as we shall show in our remarks upon the fourth division of this subject.

The term church signifies the same thing which the Athenians were wont to express by εκκλησια, from εκκαλειν to call forth, which meant among them an assembly of citizens called by the voice of a public crier, from the remaining crowd, as it were by name, and by the hundreds, for the purpose of hearing an oration, or the decision of the Senate in relation to any particular subject. The apostles, therefore, on account of this similarity borrowed the word *ecclesia* for their own purpose, in order that they might thereby express, in the most intelligent manner, the idea of the church. For the church is an assemblage of persons brought together, not by chance, nor in a disorderly manner, but called out of the kingdom of Satan by the voice of the Lord, and by the preaching of the gospel for the purpose of hearing, and embracing the word of God. The term *ecclesia* differs, therefore, from *synagogue*; for whilst the latter means any kind of an assembly, or gathering, however common, and irregularly brought together, *ecclesia*, on the other hand, denotes a congregation called together in a particular manner, and for a particular object, which is the character of the congregation of those who are called of God to a knowledge of the gospel. This congregation of those who are called of God, the Latins also express by the Greek word *ecclesia*. The German, Kirche, seems to be derived from the Greek κυριακη, which means the Lord's house, or as it is expressed in the German, Gotteshaus.

The Catechism in answer to the Question under consideration, defines the church to be that assembly, or congregation of men, chosen of God from everlasting to eternal life, *which the Son of God, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends and preserves to himself, by his Spirit and word, out of the whole human race, agreeing in true faith*, and which he will at length glorify with eternal life and glory. Such is the definition of the true church of God of which the Creed properly speaks.

II. How mani-fold is the Church?

The church is either true, or false. When we speak of the church, however, as *false*, we do not use the term in a proper, but in an improper sense; and mean by it every assembly which arrogates unto itself the name of the Christian Church, but which, instead of following it, rather persecutes it. The *true* church is either *triumphant*, which even now triumphs with the blessed angels in heaven, and which will at length obtain a complete triumph after the resurrection; or *militant*, which in this world fights under the banner of Christ against the devil, the flesh and the world. The church militant is either visible, or invisible. When spoken of as *visible*, it means an assembly of persons, who embrace and profess the entire and uncorrupted doctrine of the law and gospel, and who use the sacraments

according to the appointment of Christ, and profess obedience to the teachings of God's word. The visible church consists of many who are regenerated by the Holy Spirit through the word unto eternal life, and many also who are hypocrites and unregenerated, but who nevertheless consent to the doctrine, and conform to the external rites of the church. Or, the visible church may be defined to be the assembly of those who assent to the doctrine of God's word, among whom there are, however, many dead members, or such as have not been regenerated. "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 7 : 21.) We may here also appropriately cite the parable of the wheat and tares, and that of the net, which gathered of every kind, the good and the bad. The *invisible* church consists of those who are chosen unto eternal life, who are also regenerated, and belong to the visible church. It lies concealed in the visible church, during the whole of the struggle, and conflict which is continually going on in this world between the kingdom of light and darkness. It is likewise called the church of the saints. Those who belong to this church never perish; neither are there any hypocrites in it; for it consists only of such as are chosen unto eternal life, of whom it is said: "No man shall pluck my sheep out of my hands." "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." (John 10 : 28. 2 Tim. 2 : 19.) It is called invisible, not that the men who are in it are invisible, but because the faith and piety of those who belong to it can neither be seen, nor known, except by those who possess it; and also because we cannot with certainty distinguish the godly from those who are hypocrites in the visible church.

Furthermore, the church, both visible and invisible, is either universal or particular. *The universal visible Church* consists of all those who profess the doctrine of God's word, in whatever part of the world they may be. The *particular visible Church* comprehends those who, in any particular place, profess this doctrine. The visible church is universal in as far as it has respect to the profession of one faith in Christ, one doctrine and worship; and it is particular in as far as it has respect to place and diversity of rites and ceremonies. So also the invisible church is universal, inasmuch as all the elect of whatever place they may be, and in whatever time they may have lived, have one faith; and it is particular as in this, or that place, they have the same faith. All the particular churches are parts of the universal church; and the different parts of the visible, belong to the universal visible church; as also the invisible, are parts of the universal invisible church. And it is of this universal invisible church of which this article of the Creed properly speaks, saying, *I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.* These properties are also attributed with great propriety to the church, because it is holy, and because it is here that we find the true communion of the saints with Christ, and all his members. The difference which exists between the visible and invisible church is very nearly the same as that which exists between the whole and a part; for the invisible church is concealed in the visible, as a part in the whole, which is also corroborated by the declaration of the Apostle, where he says, "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called." (Rom. 8 : 30.) This calling, however, which God addresses to men is two-fold, inward and outward. Paul declares that the inward call is made according to the

purpose of salvation. The elect are called in both respects, whilst hypocrites have nothing more than the mere external call. It is in respect to this outward call that the visible church is termed the church of the called, in which hyocrites are also found; whilst the invisible is called the church of the elect.

Obj. 1. If the whole is visible, that which is a part thereof is also visible. Ans. That part is visible, which has respect to the persons who are called, in as far as they are men, and profess the doctrine of the visible church; but that which pertains to their piety, or their faith and repentance, is invisible.

Obj. 2. According to the foregoing definition those who are members of the church do not perish. But there are many hypocrites belonging to the church. Therefore either hypocrites will not perish, or that which is affirmed of those who belong to the church, is false. Ans. Those who belong to the invisible church will not perish, and it is of this that the foregoing definition speaks. The minor proposition has reference to the visible church, in which it is admitted that there are many hypocrites.

Obj. 3. The visible church cannot be where the invisible is not. But the invisible church was not during the reign of the Papal system. Therefore, neither did the visible church then exist. Ans. We deny the minor proposition: because there have always been some, even in the most corrupt period of the church, who held fast to the fundamental principles of the gospel. The church was oppressed, but not destroyed.

There is also another division of the church, into the church of the Old and New Testaments. The church of the Old Testament included those who received the doctrine of Moses and the Prophets, and professed that they would conform to, and preserve in the Jewish nation the ceremonies of Moses, and that they would, both among themselves, and among other nations, believe those things which were signified by these institutions having reference to the Messiah which was to come. The church of the New Testament is not thus distinguished, because all believe in the Messiah already come. It may be defined as the congregation of those who receive the doctrine of the gospel, observe the sacraments instituted by Christ, and believe in him as the true Messiah.

III. What are the Marks of the true Church?

There are three marks, or signs, by which the true church may always be known. 1. *A profession* of the true, pure, and rightly understood doctrine of the law and the gospel, which is the same thing as the doctrine of the prophets and the apostles. 2. *The right and proper use of the sacraments.* One of the objects of the sacraments, is to distinguish the true church of God from all the various sects and heretics. 3. *The profession* of obedience to this doctrine, or to the ministry. These three things which are always found in connection with the true church, are contained in the declaration of Christ, where he says: "Go ye, and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. 28: 19.) It behooves us to hold fast to these marks for the glory of God, that his enemies may be distinguished from his children; and also for our salvation, that we may associate ourselves with the true church.

Obj. 1. But there have always been great errors, public and private, found in the church. Ans. But the true foundation has always been preserved, upon which some have built gold, and others straw. Nor has the church ever defended these errors. Hence the mere fact that errors have been found in the church, does not conflict with what we have said in regard to the marks of the true church.

Obj. 2. But there have also been great and aggravated sins committed in many of the churches professing the true doctrine of God's word. Therefore obedience is not a mark of the true church. Ans. But there are many in these same churches, who do yield, and who strive to yield obedience to the requirements of God's word; and who confess and acknowledge their sins, so that these things are not defended, but deplored by the church. It is also necessary that we should add obedience to the requirements of God's word, as one of the marks of the true church, lest God should be mocked by those who might say that they receive the doctrine of Christ, and are yet unwilling to live in accordance with it.

Obj. 3. But Heretics and Schismatics also arrogate unto themselves these marks of the true church. Ans. It is, however, not to be enquired whether they claim them for themselves; but whether they really possess them.

Obj 4. That which is necessary to the existence of the church is also a mark of it. The ordinary succession of ministers, is necessary to the existence of the church in the world. Therefore this is also a mark of the true church. Ans. If the ordinary succession here spoken of be understood of the succession of the ministry in the same true doctrine of the church, and administration of the sacraments, it is true: for such a succession does not differ from the marks of the church which we have specified. But if by ordinary succession be meant a succession in the same place, whether they teach the same or different doctrines, and if it be regarded as tying or restricting the church to a certain place, city, region, &c., it is false.

IV. Why the Church is called One, Holy and Catholic.

The Church is *one*, not because those who are members thereof dwell together, or because the rites and ceremonies to which they conform are the same; but on account of their agreement in doctrine, and faith. It is called *holy*, because it is sanctified of God by the blood and Spirit of Christ, that it may be conformable to him, not in perfection, but by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, or obedience; and by having the principle of holiness; because the Holy Spirit renews and delivers the church from the dregs of sins by degrees, in order that all who belong to it may commence and practice all the parts of obedience. It is also called holy, because it is consecrated to a holy and divine use, and is separated from the ungodly who are without its pale. The Church is called, *catholic*, *first* in respect to place; because it is spread over the whole world, and is not tied or restricted to any particular place, kingdom, or certain succession. The catholicity of the church, in this respect, commenced at the time of the Apostles; because prior to this time the church was circumscribed in narrow limits, being confined to the Jewish nation. *Secondly*, in respect to men, because the church is gathered from all classes of men

of every nation. *Thirdly*, in respect to time, because it will endure throughout every period of the world: "I will be with you always even to the end of the world;" and because there is only one true Church of all times, which is of such a peculiar constitution as to embrace the whole world, and not to be tied down to any one particular place.

That there is but one church of all times, from the beginning to the end of the world, there can be no reasonable doubt; for it is manifest that the church has always existed, even before the time of Abraham. It is not to be supposed that the family of Abraham, did not worship God before his calling, and that he was only after his calling the servant of the most High. For even before he was called, he held fast to the fundamental principles of the doctrine of the true God, although they were not clearly understood, on account of the false notions and superstitions which were mingled with them. Melchisedek, who was the priest of the most high God, also lived at the same time. Hence there were besides, and before Abraham, other worshippers of the true God, whose priest Melchisedek was. That the church will always exist is evident from these declarations of Scripture: "My words shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed." "If the night and the day may be changed, my covenant may also be changed." "I will be with you always, even to the end of the world." (Is. 5: 9, 21. Jer. 33: 20. Matt. 28: 20.) Christ, moreover, always has been, and always will be king, head and priest of the church. Hence there always has been, and ever will be, a church. And hence it is also evident that the church, both of the Old and the New Testaments, is one and the same; which is also confirmed by the following article of the Creed. For Christ is the sanctifier of his church, and is common to those who have believed on him under each dispensation.

The question of the authority of the church properly belongs here, and must, therefore, be considered. The Papists say that the authority of the church is greater than that of the Scriptures, which is false. For the church did not produce the Scriptures; but the Scriptures gave birth to the church. They bring forward the testimony of Augustin against the epistle of Manichaeus, cap. 5, where he describes the manner in which he was led to embrace the faith of the Catholic Church. He says that he obeyed the Catholics when they said, "*Believe the gospel.*" And in the same book is contained that declaration of his, so generally known: "*I would not believe the gospel, unless the authority of the Catholic Church would move me.*" It was, therefore, by the testimony of the church, that he was induced to read the gospel, and to believe the doctrine which is contained therein. But what then? Does he promise himself, after he has believed, that he would have more faith in the church, than in the gospel, if the church were to propose, or to decide any thing contrary to the gospel, or which could not be proven from the Scriptures? Augustin would certainly never have assented to this. Nay, in different portions of his writings, he denounces anathemas upon those, who teach any thing different from that which we have received in the writings of the law and gospel. And in the very same place to which reference is had above, he declares, that he could not believe Manichaeus, because he believed the gospel, inasmuch as he could read nothing in the gospel concerning the apostleship of Manichaeus. Hence traditions lead us to the Scriptures, and bind us to that voice which speaks in them.

But here it must be observed how honestly the Papists act in this affair. For wherever the word tradition occurs, they wrest it in a very short time from its proper meaning, and add it to their own traditions, which they cannot prove from the word of God. As when Paul says, "I delivered unto you that which I received." (1 Cor. 15 : 3.) They immediately exclaim, do you not read of traditions? I do; but read on a little further to the place, where Paul explains what those things are, which were delivered unto him: "I delivered unto you that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. 15 : 3, 4.) Here you hear the traditions of Paul, *to be according to the Scriptures.* They were first taken out of the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and then they were committed to writing by Paul himself. Paul also says concerning the Lord's Supper: "I have received of the Lord, that which I have delivered unto you." (1 Cor. 11 : 23.) But this tradition the Apostle himself also committed to writing, after the Evangelists. The Jesuits in like manner quote the declaration of Paul in his second epistle to the Thes., 3 : 6, where he says, "Withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." But a little farther on he declares in the same chapter what tradition he meant, as must be manifest to every one that will read the passage with care. And yet they will maintain, that many things are to be believed, which cannot be proven by the testimony of the Scriptures. They also show the same effrontery in regard to another declaration of Scripture recorded in Acts 16 : 4, where it is said, "They delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem;" when it is, only a little before, declared that these decrees were sent down in letters written by the apostles.

The declaration of the Papists, that *the Church does not err*, is true in this sense: 1. The whole church does not err, even though some members of it, or a certain part of it, may err. 2. The church does not err universally, although it may in some particular points of doctrine. 3. It does not err in the foundation.

V. In what does the Church differ from the State?

The chief differences between the church and the state are the following: 1. The state is a society which is bound by certain civil laws for the maintenance of external propriety and order, according to each table of the Decalogue. The church consists of those who embrace the gospel, and observe the sacraments according to divine appointment, and is governed by the Spirit and word of God, requiring both internal and external obedience. 2. In the church there are always some holy and godly persons, which is not always true of the state. 3. There are many and different states which are distinguished from each other by locality, time and laws; neither can he who is a citizen of one state, be a citizen of another also, or of all others; nor is there any one universal state of which all others are parts. The church, however, has been, is, and ever will be, one throughout all periods, and among all nations. It is for this reason called Catholic, having many parts. 4. The head of the church is one, and in heaven, which head is Christ. The different states have many kings and rulers,

and these upon earth. 5. The state has magisterial authority and power to make laws, to which it becomes us to yield obedience for conscience sake. The church is restricted and tied down to the word of God, and has no power to make new articles of faith. It may, indeed, establish rules of order and propriety, but without binding the conscience; and that not with magisterial authority, but with consent. 6. The state is armed with power to inflict punishment upon obstinate offenders, and to preserve its laws with the sword. The church has merely the sword of the word, which consists in the denunciation of the wrath of God against those who are disobedient. One and the same person, as the prophets and priests of old, may sometimes act both in a civil and eccleciastical capacity. Hence they ought to be carefully distinguished.

VI. What is the cause of the Difference between the Church and the rest of mankind?

There are three classes of men in the world, which differ very much from each other. There are some, who by their own avowed declarations, are so entirely alienated from the church as to deny the necessity of faith and repentance, and are, therefore, the avowed enemies of God and the church. There are others again who are called, but not effectually, as hypocrites, who make a profession of faith without any true conversion to God. And finally, there are others who are effectually called, as are the elect, of which class there is but a comparatively small number, according to the declaration of Christ: "Many are called, but few are chosen." (Matt. 20: 16.)

What now is the cause of this difference? The efficient cause of this difference is the election of God, who purposes to gather to himself in this world a church. The Son of God is the mediate executor of the will of the Father, whilst the Holy Ghost is the immediate executor. The word of God is the instrumental cause: "God in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." "God hath mercy, upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me." "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called," &c. (Acts 14: 16. Rom. 9: 18; 8: 23, 30. John 6: 37.) We are taught by these declarations that the promise of grace is general in respect to those that believe. God does indeed will that all should be saved, and that, both on account of the desire which he has for the salvation of all, and also because he invites all to seek salvation. "But the election hath obtained it, (this salvation) and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11: 7.)

VII. Is there any Salvation out of the Church?

No one can be saved out of the Church: 1. Because out of the church there is no Saviour, and hence no salvation. "Without me ye can do nothing." (John 15: 5.) 2. Because those whom God has chosen to the end, which is eternal life, them he has also chosen to the means, which consist in the inward and outward call. Hence although the elect are not always members of the visible church, yet they all become such before

they die. Obj. Therefore the election of God is not free. Ans. It is free, because God chooses freely both to the end and the means, all those whom he has determined to save. He never changes his decree however, after he has chosen, and ordained to the end and the means. Infants born in the church are also of the church, notwithstanding all the cant of the Anabaptists to the contrary.

What then is it *to believe the Holy Catholic Church?* It is to believe that there always has been, is, and ever will be, to the end of time such a church in the world, and that in the congregation composing the visible church there are always some who are truly converted, and that I am one of this number; and therefore a member of both the visible and invisible church, and shall forever remain such.

OF THE ETERNAL PREDESTINATION OF GOD.

The Common Place of the eternal predestination of God, or of election and reprobation naturally grows out of the doctrine of the church: and is for this reason correctly connected with it. In the discussion of this subject we must enquire principally,

I. *Is there any predestination?*
II. *What is it?*
III. *What is the cause of it?*
IV. *What are the effects of it?*
V. *Is it unchangeable?*
VI. *To what extent may it be known by us?*
VII. *Are the elect always members of the church, and the reprobate never?*
VIII. *Can the elect fall from the church, and may the reprobate always remain in it?*
IX. *What is the use of this doctrine?*

I. Is there any Predestination?

When the question is asked, *Is there any such thing as predestination?* it is the same thing as to enquire, if God has any counsel or decree, according to which he has determined that some should be saved, and others condemned. There are some who affirm that election, when used in the Scriptures, means *excellence*, on account of which some are regarded worthy to be chosen unto everlasting life, just as a man may make choice of a noble horse, or of pure gold. It is in the same way that they explain the idea of reprobation.

This view, however, is false, in as much as election is the eternal counsel of God. That there is such a thing as predestination, or election and reprobation in God, is proven by these declarations of Scripture: "Many are called but few are chosen." "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold." "He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." "I have much people in this city." "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

"Whom he did predestinate, them he also called." (Matt. 20: 16. John 15: 16; 10: 16. Eph. 1: 4, 5. Acts 18: 10; 13: 48. Rom. 8: 30.)

The following passages of the word of God, may be regarded as having a special reference to reprobation. "God willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction." "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." "It is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." "Who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise, and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." "Ye have not the words of God, because ye are not of God." "Ye believe not; because ye are not of my sheep." "The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." (Rom. 9: 22, 13. Matt. 13: 11. Jude 4. Matt. 11: 25, 26. John 8: 47; 10: 26. Prov. 16: 4.)

Obj. 1. But the promise of grace is universal. Ans. It is universal in respect to the faithful, that is, it extends to all those that believe. And it is particular in respect to all men. Our adversaries, however, deny that it is universal, because, say they, those who are converted may fall away, which is to weaken the general promise.

To this it is objected, that God wills that all men should be saved. (2. Tim. 2: 4.) We reply, that there are other passages which must be taken in connection with this: such as these: "Many are called, but few are chosen." "This people's heart is waxed gross, saith the Lord, lest they should be converted, and I should heal them." (Matt. 20: 16; 13: 15.) Here it is declared that God wills that some should not be saved. Are we then to infer, that these declarations of divine truth contradict each other? God forbid! God wills that all men should be saved, in as far as he rejoices in the salvation of all: and he rejoices in the punishment of the wicked, yet not in as far as it is the torment of his creatures; but in as much as it is the execution of his justice. God wills that all should be saved, in as much as he, in a certain respect, invites, and calls all to repentance, but he does not will the salvation of all, as it respects the efficacy of this calling. He blesses all, "if haply they might feel after him, and find him:" (Acts 17: 27.) He invites all, and says to all; *Honesty and obedience are pleasing to me, and due to me from you;* but he does not say to all, I will produce this honesty, and obedience in you; but to the elect alone, and that because, from everlasting it has so pleased him. "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11: 7.)

Obj. 2. He who bestows his gifts unequally upon those who are equal, is a respecter of persons. Ans. He is, indeed, a respecter of persons who gives unequally to those who are equal, if he confer his gifts on account of external causes, which are not the conditions on account of which equal rewards or punishments should be given, or not given; that is, when the cause common to both parties is in his judgment overlooked, and others are regarded which do not properly belong to the cause, such as the riches, power, honors and friendship, of the one party. God, however, does not look to the outward circumstances of men, but requires faith and conversion, and gives eternal life to those who possess these, and withholds it

from those who have not this faith and conversion. Again: he is a respecter of persons, who gives unequally to those who are equal, when he is bound to give equally to all. But God gives most freely, out of his pure mercy and grace; and is bound to no one. We were all his enemies; and hence he might most justly have rejected us all. And if unrighteousness should in any respect attach itself to God, (which God forbid that we should say) he would in that case be unrighteous, and a respecter of persons if he were to give any thing. God, therefore, when he has compassion upon some, and not upon others, is no more a respecter of persons, than thou art, if, being moved by thy mercy and compassion, thou dost give alms to one beggar, and none to another, or if thou give a farthing to one, and a penny to another. Why then dost thou, O man, accuse God of injustice, because he has mercy upon whom he will, whilst he has no mercy upon those whom he will not, seeing that he is under obligation to none? "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?" "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again." (Matt. 20: 15. Rom. 11: 35.) A knowledge of this has an important bearing upon the glory of God.

Obj. 3. It is proper and just that he who has received a ransom sufficient for the sins of all, should admit all into his favor. God has received in his Son a ransom sufficient for the sins of the whole world. Therefore he is bound to receive all into his favor. Ans. It is just that he should admit all into his favor, who has received a ransom sufficient for all, and which is to be applied to all. But there is no application of this to all, because it is said, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." But a ransom, say our opponents, that is sufficient for all, ought to be applied to all; because it belongs to infinite mercy to do good to all. But we deny that infinite mercy consists in the number, that are saved. It consists rather in the manner in which they are saved. God, moreover, will not bestow this blessing upon all, because he is most wise and just. He can, and will exercise his mercy and justice at the same time. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "He that believeth not is condemned already," &c. (John 3: 16, 18.) It is still further objected: He who receives a ransom that is sufficient for all, and yet does not save all, is unjust; because he receives more than he bestows. But God is not unjust. Therefore he receives all into his favor. Ans. He, who thus acts, is unjust unless he himself gave the ransom. But God gave it. Therefore he receives of his own, and not of that which belongs to us. Again: it is not the sufficiency, but the application of this ransom which binds God to receive all into his favor. But he has not obligated himself to apply this ransom to all.

Obj. 4. He who afflicts some for the sake of his own glory, is unjust. God is not unjust. Therefore he does not afflict, nor cast off any for the sake of his own glory. Ans. We deny the major proposition if understood generally. Of creatures it is true, but it is not true of God, because he is the highest good, and the greatest respect ought to be had for the highest good. But the highest good, or the glory of God, does not merely require, that the mercy of God, but that his justice also, should be manifested. Again: he is unjust who, for his own glory, afflicts some without any sufficient cause, as when those who are punished are not worthy of death.

But this is not the case with God, who, for his own glory, permits some to perish, inasmuch as they themselves willingly fall into sin, and perish. Nor is God any more bound to save men, than he was to create them. He does, indeed, permit men to fall into sin; but they do it freely, himself not being bound to save any; but bound to have a greater regard for his own glory, than the salvation of the reprobate.

Obj. 5. But he who predestinates to a certain end, also predestinates the means through which this end is attained. God, according to this doctrine, predestinates some to damnation. Therefore he also predestinates them to sin, as the means through which they are brought to this end. That sin is the means through which this end is reached, is evident from the fact that none are damned, but those who are guilty of sin. Ans. There are two kinds of means. There are some means which, in whatever way it may be, go before the end, and which he employs who is aiming at a certain end, and by the help of which he reaches and accomplishes the end which he intended. There are also other means which do, indeed, contribute to a certain end, but which are not done by him who intends the end; but are merely permitted, from which it does not follow that he wills them. We reply, therefore, to the major proposition; he who wills the end, wills also the means which he himself employs, and by which he works for the accomplishment of the end which he intends; but he does not will all means, otherwise there would be more in the conclusion, than in the premises. Neither does God will those things which he permits: he merely does not prevent their accomplishment, if they do not hinder his end.

Obj. 6. He who calls all, and, in the mean while, wills to save only a certain number, dissembles. God, according to this doctrine, does so. Therefore he dissembles. Ans. Nothing can be inferred from mere particulars. Or we may reply, that there is here an incorrect chain of reasoning, by putting that for a cause which is no cause. The first proposition, moreover, if understood universally, is false; because there may be another cause. God calls all, not that he may dissemble and deceive, but that he may render all inexcusable. Hence the major proposition ought to be distinguished thus: He who calls all, and yet wills to save only a certain number, that he may deceive them, is guilty of dissembling, if he call them indiscriminately, and with a mind unwilling to influence all to obey. But God never promised that he would effect this in all. There is, therefore, no contradiction in these premises or declarations; all ought to do it, and I will effect it in some; because the terms are not the same.

Obj. 7. They cannot have comfort whose salvation depends on the secret counsel of God. Our salvation depends upon the secret counsel of God. Therefore we cannot have comfort. Ans. We cannot, indeed, have comfort before the will of God is revealed unto us. But God has made known his secret counsel through his Son, and the Holy Spirit; and also by the effects which accompany it, according as it is said: "Being justified by faith we have peace." "Who hath also sealed us, and given us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." "Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." (Rom. 5: 1. 2 Cor. 1: 22. Rom. 8: 16. 1 John 3: 24.) It is true, therefore, that before the secret counsel of God is made known unto us, we can obtain no comfort from it; but it is different after it is once known.

Obj. 8. No man ought to attempt that which is done in vain. But it is to no purpose that reprobates repent, in as much as their salvation is impossible. Therefore they ought not to attempt it. Ans. This would be true if they knew that they were among the reprobate; but God has not been pleased to reveal this to any one. The objection, therefore, involves a contradiction, in that it affirms that one can be among the reprobate, and yet repent. If any one repent, he is no longer a reprobate. There is, therefore, no danger to be apprehended from this absurdity.

II. What is Predestination?

Predestination differs from providence, as species from genus. Providence is the counsel of God concerning all his creatures; but predestination is the counsel of God, with reference to the salvation of angels, and men. Predestination is, therefore, the eternal, most righteous and unchangable counsel of God concerning the creation of man, the permission of man to fall into sin and eternal death, the sending of his Son in the flesh that he might be a sacrifice, and the salvation of some by true faith and conversion through the Holy Spirit and the word for the sake of the mediator, by, and on account of whom they are justified, raised to glory, and rewarded with eternal life; whilst the rest are left in sin and death, raised to judgement, and cast into everlasting punishment. This definition of predestination is given with reference to men, and not to angels, because it is of the salvation of men that we shall here speak.

The two parts of predestination are embraced in *election and reprobation. Election* is the eternal and unchangeable decree of God, by which he has graciously decreed to convert some to Chist, to preserve them in faith, and repentance, and through him to bestow upon them eternal life. *Reprobation* is the eternal, and unchangeable purpose of God, whereby he has decreed in his most just judgement to leave some in their sins, to punish them with blindness, and to condemn them eternally, not being made partakers of Christ, and his benefits. That both election and reprobation are the decree of God, these and similar declarations of Scripture prove: "I know whom I have chosen." "According to his grace which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began." "He hath mercy on whom he will." (John 13: 18. 2. Tim. 1: 9. Rom. 9: 18.) Election and reprobation were, therefore, made with counsel; and hence each is the decree of God, and for this reason eternal: because there is nothing new in God, but all things are from everlasting, or before the foundation of the world. In as much now as he has chosen us, he must have rejected the rest, which is still further proven by the import of the word election, or choice; for that which is chosen, is selected, whilst other things are rejected.

III. What are the causes of Predestination?

The efficient and moving cause of predestination is the good pleasure of God. "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matt. 11: 26.) God saw nothing good in us, on account of which he chose us, seeing that we were all by nature the children of wrath, even as others. And whatever good there is in us, that God has wholly wrought.

But he effects nothing in us, which he has not decreed from everlasting. Wherefore the good pleasure of God, which alone is most free, and gracious, or the mercy of God exercised most freely, is the efficient, and moving cause of our election. It is of grace we say, and not out of regard to any goodness seen in us. "He hath mercy on whom he will." "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." "God hath predestinated us, unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will." "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger. So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Whom he will, he hardeneth." "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou, that thou didst not receive." "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (Rom. 9: 18. John 15: 16. Rom. 9: 10, 11, 16. Col. 1: 12. 1. Cor. 4: 7. 2. Tim. 1: 9.)

The efficient cause of reprobation is also, in like manner, the good pleasure of God which is most free. For seeing that we are all by nature the children of wrath we should all perish if sin were the cause of reprobation. The cause of reprobation is, therefore, not in men, but in God, and is his will showing forth his own glory, as it is said, "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will be hardeneth." "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Hence in relation to individuals, no other reason can be given why this one is elected, and that one reprobated, but the good pleasure of God.

The cause of damnation, however, which is sin, is wholly in men. God will declare his justice in the condemnation of the reprobate. And hence he condemns no one, neither does he give any over to damnation, unless it be on account of sin: God does not will the damnation of any one, as it is damnation, but as a just punishment. Neither does punishment ever take place, except where sin has reigned. Hence the chief cause, and source of damnation is to be found in the free will of devils and men; because they of their own accord separated themselves from God. But the chief cause of salvation is the eternal, and most free election of God, who saw nothing in us, why he should convert us unto Christ, rather than others, and save and rescue us from the common ruin, to which all were exposed on account of sin.

The chief final cause of predestination is the manifestation of the glory of God. The last, and proper final cause of election is the manifestation of the goodness and mercy of God in saving the elect by his grace; and the next final cause is the justification of the elect, and their salvation through Christ. The apostle comprehends each of these causes in the words; "He hath predestinated us to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. 1: 6.) On the contrary, the chief final cause of reprobation is the declaration of the justice, severity and hatred of God against sin in the reprobate; "God willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction." (Rom. 9: 22.)

Obj. 1. God fore-knew our works, and, therefore, himself chose us on account of them. Ans. He fore-knew those good things, which he had determined to work in us, and not which we ourselves would accomplish, as he also fore-knew the persons; otherwise he could not have foreknown any good. So God could not have foreseen any evil works, unless he had resolved to permit them.

Obj. 2. Those whom God chose in Christ, he found in him, inasmuch as he confers his benefits upon none, except those who are in Christ. God chose us in Christ. Therefore he found us in him, that is, he foresaw that we would receive Christ, believe in him, and be better than others, and hence chose us. Ans. We deny the major proposition, because the reason which it assigned is true, not of election, but of the effects of election, and of the consummation of the benefits of Christ, which extend to none, except those who are united to Christ by faith, as it is said: "Except ye abide in me, ye shall have no life in you." (John 15: 4.) But it is false when applied to election, and the first cause of our salvation, as is evident from the declaration of the Apostle (Eph. 1: 4.) to which the objection refers; for he chose us before the foundation of the world, not because we were, but that we might be blameless and holy, and thus better than others; not that we were already in Christ, but that he might engraft us into him, and adopt us among his children. Our faith, or holiness, therefore, which was foreseen is not the cause, but the effect of our election in Christ. He chose us, not as being already sons, but that we might be adopted among his children. Augustin says: "*He chose us, not for the reason that we were then holy; nor yet because we would become holy; but rather for this end, that in the day of grace we might be holy through good work.*" He chose us then, not because we would be holy, but in order that we might be holy. The Pelagians, perverting the truth, say, God foreknew who would be holy, and without blame by the choice of their free will, and for this reason chose them by his fore-knowledge, such as he knew they would be. The Apostle, however, refutes this position in the passage already referred to, where he says that God chose us *that we should be holy.*

Obj. 3. But the cause of our election is the merit of Christ applied unto us by faith. Therefore it is not the good pleasure of God. Ans. We deny the antecedent, for the reason that the merit of Christ is not enumerated among the causes, but among the effects of election, and the causes of our salvation. He chose us in Christ, viz, as in the Head. Hence he first chose the head, and ordained him to the office of mediator. as Peter testifies: (1 Pet. 1: 20.) then he chose us also as members of that head. "God so loved the world that he," &c. (John 3: 16.) The love of God, therefore, which is his free election, is the cause on account of which he sent his Son, and not the sending of his Son, the cause of his love.

Obj. 4. Evil works are the cause of reprobation. Therefore, good works are the cause of election. Ans. We deny the first proposition; for evil works are not the cause of reprobation, but of damnation, and the appointment thereto, which follows reprobation. If sin were the cause of reprobation, we should all be reprobates; because we are all equally the children of wrath. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might

stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger." (Rom. 9: 11, 12.) "*Good works*," said Augustin, "*do not precede, but follow justification.*" They are, therefore, not the cause of justification; much less are they the cause of our election. They spring from, and have their perpetual virtue in the grace of God alone.

IV. What are the effects of Predestination?

The effects of election comprehend the entire work of our salvation, and the degrees of our redemption which may be said to embrace the following particulars: 1. The establishment and gathering of the Church. 2. The gift, and mission of Christ, the mediator, and of his sacrifice. 3. The effectual calling and conversion of the elect to Christ by the word and Spirit of God. 4. Faith, justification and regeneration. 5. Good works. 6. Final perseverance. 7. Our resurrection unto glory. 8. Our glorification and eternal life.

The effects of reprobation comprise: 1. The creation of the reprobate. 2. The want of the grace of God. 3. Blindness and obduracy. 4. Perseverance in sin. 5. Their resurrection to the judgment. 6. Their banishment into everlasting punishment.

Obj. 1. Different causes produce different effects. The effects of election are good works. Therefore the effects of reprobation are evil works. Ans. Nothing can be decided upon from mere particulars. The major proposition, moreover, is not always true of voluntary causes, which may work differently, and yet not produce contrary effects, as is true in the present instance; because God has decreed to effect good works in the elect, and to permit those that are evil in the reprobate. The devil and wicked men are, however, the proper cause of evil works.

Obj. 2. Blindness is the effect of reprobation. But blindness is sin. Therefore sin is the effect of reprobation. Ans. Blindness is a sin in respect to the persons who bring it upon themselves, or in as far as it is received and merited; but in as far as God inflicts it upon wicked men for rejecting the truth, it is a just punishment, from which it is of his mercy alone, if he delivers any.

V. Is Predestination unchangeable?

Predestination is fixed and unchangeable. This is evident from the general reason, that God is unchangeable, and that his decree does not depend upon the various changes which are occurring in the world, which rather depend upon the divine decree. What God has, therefore, determined from everlasting concerning the salvation of the elect, and the damnation of the reprobate, he has decreed unchangeably. Hence both election and reprobation are fixed and unchangeable. Those whom God has willed, and determined from everlasting should be saved, them he now, and for ever desires and purposes to save, which may also be said in relation to reprobation, for it is likewise unchangeable. There are various declarations of Scripture which prove this: "My counsel shall stand." "I am the Lord, I change not." "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing." "Neither shall any man

pluck my sheep out of my hand." "Ye believe not; because ye are not of my sheep." "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal." "The Lord knoweth them that are his." (Is. 46: 10. Matt. 3: 6. John 6: 39; 10: 28, 26. 2 Tim 2: 19.) That the decree of God concerning the salvation of the elect is the foundation of which Paul speaks in the last passage just quoted, may be inferred from the fact that it is the origin, and foundation of our salvation, and of all the means which contribute to it; and also because it is solid, and firm like a foundation, and is, therefore, never overthrown. It is necessary that we should have a knowledge of this, in order that we may have sure comfort, believe in eternal life and all the other articles of our faith. This reason is frequently repeated in the Scriptures, and should often be thought upon; because he who has no firm assurance of future grace, is also uncertain of present grace, inasmuch as God is unchangeable.

VI. To what extent may we know the predestination of God; and can we, and ought we to be certain of it?

Election and reprobation are known in general, as that there are some elect, and some reprobate: but not in particular, as, that this one, or that one is chosen, or not. But of our own election in particular, we not only may, but ought to be certain, the knowledge of which is obtained, *a posteriori*, that is, from our conversion to God, or from true faith and repentance, which are the effects of our election unto eternal life. That we may know and believe that we are certainly chosen of God, we must believe in Christ, and also in eternal life. This, however, we cannot do except we have true faith and repentance. And as every one ought to have this faith and repentence, so each one ought certainly to believe that he is of the number of the elect, or else he will charge upon God a lie. "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. 5: 2.) Christ is our intercessor, and prevails in our behalf, that we may for ever be preserved. *I believe in eternal life*, (not only spiritual, but eternal) which being here commenced, I carry with me out of this life. Nor does every one only know his own election in particular from his faith and conversion; but he may also know in general that others are also elected. And in general we ought not only to hope, but also to believe firmly that there are others elected besides ourselves; for we are bound to believe in the article concerning the church, that it always has been, and now is. But no one separately considered is the church, nor should any one say as Elijah, "I, even I only, am left." (1 Kings 19: 14.) But it does not belong to us to discern in regard to every individual. It is well, however, that we should hope in regard to the election of others, even individually. In short, the election of all is known in general; but it is known in particular in a different respect of one's self, and of others.

In relation to reprobation no one ought to determine any thing with certainty, either concerning himself, or another before the end of life, for the reason that he who is not yet converted, may be before he dies. Hence no one ought to decide concerning others that they are reprobate, but should hope for the best. In regard to himself, however, every one ought to believe with certainty that he is one of the elect; for we have a universal command for all to repent, and believe the gospel.

VII. Are the Elect always members of the Church, and the Reprobate never?

The elect are not alway members of the church, but become such when they are converted, and regenerated by the Holy Spirit. For it is said; "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." (Rom. 8: 9.) The church is likewise called holy. But the elect are not holy before their conversion to God; for Paul expressly says: "Such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified." And again; "Who hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Cor. 6: 11. Col. 1: 13.) There are some who are born in the church, and live and die in it, whilst others again are not born in it; but are called, some sooner and others later to the church visible and invisible, as the thief on the cross. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring," said Christ. (John 10: 16.) "I have much people in this city," that is by election. (Acts 18: 10.) So the reprobate are not always estranged from the church; but are sometimes born in it, and sometimes become members of the visible church, and go out from it again. "They went out from us." "Grievous wolves shall enter in among you." (1. John 2: 19. Acts 20: 29.)

Obj. 1. All those that believe are always members of the church. But all the elect believe, because the saved, the elect, the faithful are interchangeable terms. Therefore all the elect are always members of the church. Ans. We reply to the minor proposition, that the terms enumerated are indeed interchangeable, but are nevertheless used with a certain limitation. All the faithful, and those that are to be saved are elected, and that always, and at all times. And all the elect are such as do believe, and as will be saved, yet not always; for at one time it may be said of them that they are to be saved; at another that they do believe, and at another that they are saved. So far then these terms are convertable; because all the elect do believe, or will believe before the end of life: for now is the day of grace: then will be the day of judgment.

Obj. 2. Christ notwithstanding calls those his sheep, who are not as yet converted from the Gentiles. "I have," said he, "other sheep which are not of this fold," which means that they are not of that portion of the church which was to be gathered from among the Jews. Therefore those other sheep, seem to be of the general flock. Ans. These were even then sheep, as to the counsel, and care of God, but not as touching the fulfillment of his decree: in other words they were sheep by predestination. In short, the elect are not always members of the church, but it is necessary, that they should be brought into the church, even if it should occur in the very moment of death. This is what we mean when we say that it is necessary that all the elect in this life begin eternal life. The reprobate are indeed sometimes members of the visible church, and are not always estranged from it: but they never truly came into it, nor are they ever members of the invisible church, which is that of the saints; for they are always aliens to this.

VIII. Can the elect fall from the Church, and may the Reprobate always remain in it?

This question has already to a certain extent been answered in what we have said of the unchangeableness of election, and of the perseverance of the saints. The elect when they are once truly in the church of the saints, may indeed sometimes fall, but they never wholly and finally depart from it; not wholly, because they never so fall that they may become the enemies of God and the church; nor yet finally, because they do not continue in apostacy, but do most certainly at length repent and turn to God. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (Is. 42: 3. John 10: 28.) But all the reprobate, and hypocrites do at length go out of the church, and with the gifts which they had, they lose also those which they seemed to have. "They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." (John 2: 19.)

Obj. But the saints have also fallen into sin, as David, Peter, &c., Ans. They fall, but not totally, nor finally. Peter fell, but not totally nor finally, for he retained in his heart the love of Christ, although he denied him through fear of danger. He also afterward acknowledged his fall, and wept bitterly over it. Augustin says; "*Peter's faith did not fail in his heart, when he ceased to make confession with his mouth.*" Nor did David fall totally; for being reproved of God by his prophet, he did truly repent, and gave evidence that his faith was not wholly lost, but merely slumbered for a time. Hence he prayed, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." Ps. 51: 13.) The saints, therefore, never wholly fall. But hypocrites, and the reprobate at length wholly, and finally fall away in such a manner, that they never return to repentance: and because the love of God was never in them, they were never of the member of the elect. Hence it is not to be wondered at, if they at length wholly fall from the church.

IX. What is the use of this Doctrine?

The use of this doctrine is, first that all the glory of our salvation may be attributed to God. "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive." (1. Cor. 4: 7.) And secondly, that we may have sure, and certain comfort. This consolation we shall not want, if we do not doubt in reference to the things here taught: and especially if every one of us be firmly persuaded, that the decree of God concerning the salvation of the elect be wholly unchangeable; and also that he himself is one of the number of the elect, a living member of the invisible church, and that he shall never depart from the communion of the Saints.

Question 55. What do you understand by "the communion of saints?"

Answer. First, that all and every one who believes, being members of Christ, are in common partakers of him, and of all his riches and gifts; secondly, that every one must know it to be his duty, readily and cheerfully to employ his gifts for the advantage and salvation of other members.

EXPOSITION.

The articles of the Creed which we have yet to consider, treat of the benefits of Christ which have been, and shall be conferred upon the church by the Holy Ghost. The term communion expresses the relation between two or more persons, who have the same thing, or possession in common. The foundation or ground of this communion is the thing which is common. The term itself signifies the possessors, few or many, who have common fruition in one, or many things. *The communion of saints*, therefore, is an equal participation in all the promises of the gospel; or it is the common possession of Christ, and all his benefits; and the bestowment of the gifts which are given to each member for the salvation of the church. It signifies then, 1. *The union of all the saints with Christ*, as members with the head, which is effected by the Holy Ghost, who dwells in the head, and in the members, conforming and making them like unto their glorious Head, yet preserving a proper proportion between the head and the members; or, it is a union of the church with Christ, and of the members one with another; which union with Christ extends to his whole person, including both, his divine and human natures; for communion with the person of Christ is the foundation of communion in his benefits, according to what is said: "I am the vine; ye are the branches." "Abide in me, and I in you." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me." "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit." "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." (John 15: 4, 5. 1 Cor. 12: 13. Rom. 8: 9. 1 Cor. 6: 17. 1 John 4: 13.) 2. *A participation in all the benefits of Christ.* The same reconciliation, redemption, justification, sanctification, life and salvation, belong to all the saints by and for the sake of Christ. They have in common all the benefits which are necessary for their salvation. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism," &c. (Eph. 4: 4.) 3. *The distribution of special gifts.* These particular gifts which are bestowed upon some members of the church for the salvation of the whole body, for the gathering of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edification of the church, are also common to the whole church: yet they are at the same time so distributed to all its members that some excel in one particular kind of gifts, whilst others again excel in other respects; for there are different gifts of the Spirit, and "to every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Eph. 4: 7.) 4. *The obligation of all the members* to devote all the gifts which have been conferred upon them to the glory of Christ, their Head, and to the salvation of the whole body, and of every member mutually.

From what has now been said, we may readily see how vain is the exposition of those, who make the communion of saints to consist in the subsistence of Christ's body in and with our bodies. This opinion is refuted by the often-repeated comparison of the head and the members, which, although they are united in the closest manner, nevertheless, subsist without any mixture or confusion. From this we may also easily judge of the communion which we have in the sacraments; for they seal nothing different

from what the word promises. The same error is also refuted by the consideration, that it is necessary that this communion should continue for ever. It is to this end that Christ communicates himself to us, that he may dwell, and remain in us. Hence the communion of Christ is such as his dwelling in us is, which being spiritual is to last for ever. Wherefore his communion must also be perpetual. This argument is conclusive, and has driven some to the notion of *ubiquity*, in order that they might overthrow it; for to maintain that other corporeal communion, they are constrained to affirm that Christ continually dwells bodily in the saints.

Believers are called *saints* in three respects: by the imputation of Christ's righteousness; by the beginning of conformity to the law which is commenced in them; and by their separation from the rest of the human race, being called of God to the end that they may truly know and worship him.

Hence we may now understand what we mean when we say, *I believe in the communion of saints;* viz, I believe that all the saints (to the company of whom I am firmly persuaded that I belong) are united to Christ, their head, by his Spirit, and that gifts are bestowed upon them from the head, including such as are the same in all and necessary for their salvation, as well as those which are diverse and variously bestowed upon every one, and which are requisite for the edification of the church.

Question 56. What believest thou concerning "the forgiveness of sins?"

Answer. That God, for the sake of Christ's satisfaction, will no more remember my sins, neither my corrupt nature, against which I have to struggle all my life long, but will graciously impute to me the righteousness of Christ, that I may never be condemned before the tribunal of God.

EXPOSITION.

Concerning the forgiveness of sins we must consider:

I. *What it is:*
II. *By whom it is granted:*
III. *On account of what it is granted:*
IV. *Whether it comports with the justice of God:*
V. *If it is gratuitous:*
VI. *To whom it is granted: and*
VII. *How and when it is given.*

I. What the forgiveness of sins is.

The forgiveness of sins consists in the purpose of God, not to punish the sins of the faithful on account of the satisfaction of Christ. Or, it is the pardon of deserved punishment, and the bestowment and imputation of the righteousness of another, even Christ. It is more fully defined in this manner: To be the will of God which does not impute any sin to the faithful and elect; but remits unto them both the guilt and punishment of sin,

loves them just as much as if they had not sinned, delivers them from all the punishment of sin, and freely grants them eternal life in view of the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our mediator. But although God remits unto us our sins for the sake of the merits of his Son, yet he still afflicts us in this life, not, indeed, that he may punish us, but that he may chastise us as a father. Neither must we suppose, because God does not punish our sins, that they are not displeasing to him, for the sins even of the most holy greatly offend him, although he does not punish them for their sins, for the reason that he has punished them in his Son. For God does not so remit sins as if he did not regard them as sins, or were not displeased therewith; but because he does not impute them unto us, nor punish them in us, and because he accounts us righteous on account of the satisfaction of another, which we apprehend by faith. It is, therefore, the same thing to have the remission of sins, and to be righteous. Obj. The law does not only demand that we avoid sin, but also that we do good. Therefore it is not sufficient that sin be pardoned, but it is also necessary that perfect obedience be rendered to the law that we may be just. Ans. Even the omission of doing good is sin; for he that can do good and does it not, is a sinner, and accursed. (James 4: 17.) This forgiveness is granted unto us, because Christ has sufficiently satisfied for all our sins. Hence we have in Christ perfect remission of all our sins in such a way, that we are accounted righteous in the sight of God by his merits alone.

II. By whom forgiveness of sins is granted.

Remission of sins is granted by God alone, who, as the prophet says, (Is. 43: 25.) "blotteth out our transgressions." This is done by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; for we are baptized in the name of the three persons of the Godhead. That we are baptized unto the remission of sins, is evident from the baptism of John. And the Scriptures plainly affirm of Christ, that the Son of man hath power to forgive sins. (Matt. 9: 6.) So also it is said of the Holy Ghost that he was tempted, offended and grieved on account of sin; and hence he also has power to forgive it; for no one can forgive sin, except the person against whom it is committed, and who is offended thereby. Christ likewise speaks in express terms of the sin against the Holy Ghost. The reason why no one but God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, can forgive sin, arises from this, that none but the offended party can remit sin. Now no one is offended at sin except God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Therefore no one else can forgive sin; consequently no creature can grant any thing which rightfully belongs to God. Hence David said, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." (Ps. 51: 6.)

Obj. But the apostles also, and the church, remit sins, as it is said, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained." (Matt. 18: 18. John 20: 23.) Therefore it is not true that none but God can forgive sins. Ans. The apostles forgave sin in as far as they announced the forgiveness of God. So the church forgives sin, when she, according to the command of God, pronounces

forgiveness to the penitent. So likewise one neighbor remits sin to another, when he pardons private offences. But God alone frees us from the guilt of sin by his own authority; he alone cleanses us from all impurity by the blood of his Son, and remits all sins, original and actual, whether they be sins of omission or of ignorance, as it is said, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities." "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Ps. 103: 3. Rom. 8: 1.)

III. On account of what is forgiveness granted?

God forgives our sins out of his pure mercy, and free love towards us; and on account of the intercession and satisfaction of Christ applied by faith. Intercession could not be made without satisfaction, because that would be to ask of God to yield somewhat of his justice. "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." "For it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell in Christ; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself." "Ye are come to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things, than that of Abel." "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace." (1 Pet. 3: 18. 1 John 1: 7. Col. 1: 19, 20. Heb. 12: 24. Eph. 1: 7.)

IV. Whether forgiveness of sins comports with the justice of God.

It belongs to God, as a most righteous judge, not to permit sin to pass by with impunity, so that he cannot remit it, unless some sufficient satisfaction be made. Hence God cannot grant the forgiveness of sins out of his clemency, which would conflict with his justice, for the reason that he would then suffer it to pass by unpunished; but he has punished it most sufficiently in Christ. God then pronounces us righteous, and such as are not to be punished in view of the perfect satisfaction of Christ, which does not conflict with his justice and truth.

Obj. 1. The justice of God demands that he who sins, should be punished. Therefore that forgiveness which is granted without a sufficient punishment of the sinner, conflicts with the justice of God. Ans. It would, indeed, conflict with the justice of God, if he were not to punish sin at all, neither in the sinner, nor in any one else, who might endure punishment in the sinner's room and stead.

Obj. 2. But to punish the innocent in the place of the guilty is also repugnant to the justice of God. Ans. This objection would have force, 1. If the innocent one were unwilling to endure the punishment which would be required. 2. If he were not of the same nature with the guilty. 3. If he were not able to undergo a sufficient punishment. 4. If he could not come forth from this punishment; for God would not have the innocent to perish for the guilty. 5. If he were not able to renew and regenerate the sinner, and give him faith so that he might embrace his benefits. But all these conditions meet in Christ, as is clearly evident from the following portions of Scripture: "Christ hath loved us and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling

savour." "I lay down my life for the sheep." "He was wounded for our transgressions, and was bruised for our iniquities." "Christ died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "I lay down my life that I might take it again." "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it." "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Eph. 5: 2. John 10: 15. Is. 53: 5. 2 Cor. 5: 15. John 2: 19; 10: 17. Eph. 5: 25. Tit. 2: 14.)

V. Is the forgiveness of sins gratuitous?

Although God does not extend unto us the forgiveness of our sins, unless a sufficient satisfaction be made, yet he nevertheless grants remission freely, because he does not demand satisfaction from us, but from Christ upon whom our sins were laid.

Obj. But if God forgive sins for the sake of the satisfaction of Christ, it is not free. Ans. It is, indeed, free in respect to us; for it is without any satisfaction on our part, although not without the satisfaction of another. To this it is objected; he that grants pardon upon this condition, does not grant it freely; for it is an established rule, *That whatever any one does through another, he seems to do through himself.* Therefore we ourselves give this satisfaction, by paying it through Christ. Ans. But God also gives this price, or ransom for us, that is, he gave Christ to be our satisfier and mediator; for he was not purchased by us. "God so loved the world that he gave his," &c. (John 3: 16.)

VI. To whom is the forgiveness of sins granted?

The forgiveness of sins is extended to all and only the elect; because it is given to such as believe. In as much now as the reprobate never do truly believe, they never receive the forgiveness of sins. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." "To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (John 3: 36. Acts 10: 43.) All the elect, however, do not always enjoy the forgiveness of sins, but all those that believe always have it; for none have the remission of sins, but those who believe that they have it. But all the elect do not always believe this: but then first when they are converted, and made the possessors of a true faith. Yet they always have the remission of sins, in respect to the purpose of God. Even infants have faith in possibility and inclination, although not actually. Hence they also have the forgiveness of sins.

VII. How and when the forgiveness of sins is granted.

The forgiveness of sins is granted and received by faith alone, which the Holy Spirit works and kindles in us. It may be said then, that the forgiveness of sins is granted at the time when it is received by faith. God has, indeed, determined from everlasting to pardon the sins of those whom he has chosen in Christ, for the sake of his satisfaction, but he pardons the

sins of every one, and of all that believe in Christ, at the time when he accounts them as righteous, and works in their hearts by the Holy Spirit a sense of this pardon, so that they may forever remain certain in regard to it. The decree of God, therefore, concerning the forgiveness of sins is everlasting, but the execution of it takes place at the time when we apply to ourselves by faith the forgiveness which the gospel offers unto us. It is in the same way that God always loves his people, but he does not shed abroad this love in their hearts before their repentance. But those who do truly repent obtain at length the testimony of their conscience, by the Holy Spirit which is given unto them, that they are beloved of God, and so enjoy the forgiveness of sins.

Question. 57. What comfort doth the "resurrection of the body" afford thee?

Answer. That not only my soul, after this life, shall be immediately taken up to Christ, its head, but also that this my body, being raised, by the power of Christ, shall be reunited with my soul, and made like unto the glorious body of Christ!

EXPOSITION.

The questions which properly belong to this Article of the Creed are such as the following:

I. *Is the soul immortal?*
II. *Where is it, when separated from the body?*
III. *What is the resurrection, and what the errors which are entertained in regard to it?*
IV. *From what does it appear that there certainly will be a future resurrection?*
V. *What kind of bodies will rise in the resurrection?*
VI. *How will it be effected?*
VII. *When will it take place?*
VIII. *By whose power, and through whom?*
IX. *For what purpose will there be a future resurrection?*

I. Is the soul immortal?

The question of the immortality of the soul belongs properly to this Article; for the resurrection presupposes death. We must, therefore, inquire, does the soul die, and rise again as the body? Nor will the discussion of this question be unprofitable and vain, for it will be calculated to lead us to a proper understanding of many passages of Scripture, which seem to speak of the soul of man as though it were mortal; and will also be a refutation of the errors of the Epicureans and Sadducees, who already in former times denied the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body; as also those, who said that the resurrection of believers was already past, and who would admit of no other resurrection but that which is spiritual. And even at this day, it is argued by some Anabaptists that the soul after it is separated from the body, lies dormant until the future

resurrection, when it will again be reunited to the body. Paul the third, Pope of Rome, when he was at the point of death said; "*now he would find out the truth of three questions, concerning which he had doubts during the whole of his life; whether the soul be immortal—whether there be a hell, and whether there be a God.*" There are also in the Psalms, and in the writings of Solomon a number of declarations of a somewhat similar character to the following: "Man dieth as a beast." "The dead praise not the Lord." (Eccl. 3: 19. Ps. 115: 17.) Hence there is a propriety in the discussion of this subject.

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is established by such declarations of the word of God as these: "For when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him. Though, while he lived, he blessed his soul." "As thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing." "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." "As touching the dead, that they rise, have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living." (Ps. 49: 17, 18. 2. Sam. 11: 11. Matt. 10: 28. Mark 12: 26; 27.) Christ when hanging upon the cross said to the thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." (Luke 23: 43.) But he could not be there in his body, because that was dead, and buried. Therefore his soul was brought with Christ into Paradise, and hence the soul must live after death. Paul said; "I have a desire to depart and be with Christ." (Phil. 1: 23.) He spoke this in reference to the rest, and joy which he would have with Christ after death. But what can be the joy or blessedness of those, who are in a state of unconsciousness? Hence those who imagine that the soul sleeps after death, and so deny its immortality, are refuted by this passage of Scripture. "Father into thy hands, I commend my spirit." "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live." "We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." (Luke 23: 46. Acts 7: 59. John 11: 25. 2. Cor. 5: 8.) The soul therefore, does not sleep after death, but enjoys immortal life, and heavenly glory with the Lord. In the Revelation of St. John chap. 6: v. 10, the souls of the martyrs are said to cry under the altar with a loud voice saying. "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth." Hence they must be alive. In the gospel of Luke 16: 22, Lazarus is said to have been carried after his death to Abraham's bosom, whilst the rich man, on the other hand, was sent to hell, the place of torment. These and similar passages of Scripture teach and prove most conclusively, that the soul, not only in the body before death, and after the resurrection of the body from the dead, but also during the whole space that intervenes between death, and the resurrection, exists, lives, feels, and understands without the body, although the manner of its operation without the body is altogether unknown to us. Lastly the resurrection of the body presupposes the immortality of the soul, so that believing in the one, we also believe in the other. For as it is the same body which shall rise again, it is necessary that it should be fashioned by the same substantial form which it formerly had, which is the soul. Not every change of an accidental form constitutes another individual; the individual

remains the same as long as the same matter is quickened with the same substantial form. But if the soul die, and God were to create another soul, and infuse it into the body, then it would not be the same, but a different form that would quicken and fashion the body; and so it would not be the same individual. But it will be the same body which shall rise in the resurrection, as we shall show when we come to discuss the fifth question under this article.

Obj. 1. But it is said in Eccl. 3: 19, that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast, that as the one doeth, so does the other. Therefore the soul is not immortal. Ans. There is here an incorrect conclusion, by inferring that to be similar in all respects, which is so only in certain particulars. The condition of both man and beast is the same, as to the necessity of death; for men, as well as beasts, must necessarily die at some time, and depart out of this life; because it is appointed unto men once to die, so that no one has here a permanent abiding place. But the condition of man and beasts is not the same in the event of death and the state which follows; for whilst the existence of the brute becomes extinct and vanishes away, the soul of man, on the other hand, remains alive and active after death, as has just been shown. We also deny the antecedent; for the Preacher does not speak of the death of man, according to his own, but according to the sentiment and opinion of the great mass of men, based upon the apparent similarity of events, which happen both to the good and the evil. He joins this complaint of the judgment of man to the doctrine of the providence and judgment of God, by which good will at length be conferred upon the righteous, and evil upon the wicked.

Obj. 2. But it is also said, (Ps. 115: 17,) "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Ans. They do not so praise the Lord as we do in this life; but it does not follow from this, that they shall not praise the Lord at all, after they have once departed this life.

II. Where, and in what state does the soul remain, when separated from the body?

The Papists imagine that the souls of men, at the time they are separated from their bodies, pass into the fire of purgatory, that they may there be purified from sin, some sooner, and others later, according as they, during the period of life, loved to a greater or less extent, the perishing things of this world, as Lombard says. The Scriptures teach, on the contrary, that no fire after death, but that the blood of Christ, purifies our souls in this life from all sin. They also teach that the souls of the faithful, when they die, are not cast into the place of torments, there to be purified by fire, but that they are gathered to Christ in Abraham's bosom, whilst the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, from which there is no way of escape, and where they are now tormented with hellish agonies, being at the same time reserved for the more intolerable torments of that eternal fire which the wrath of God will kindle in the judgment, which Christ will execute at the end of the world.

The Scriptures, in many places, speak of the state and condition of the souls of the faithful after death in the following manner: "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels

into Abraham's bosom." (Luke 23 : 46. Acts 7 : 59. Luke 16 : 22.) From what is here said, it is plain that the souls of the pious dead are not in purgatory. Paul says, (Phil. 1 : 23) "I have a desire to depart, and be with Christ." He did not, therefore, have any fears of purgatory. The godly are "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." (2 Cor. 5 : 8.) They do not, therefore, pass through purgatory before they come into the presence of the Lord.

The following passages of the word of God speak of the condition of the wicked after death. "The wages of sin is death." "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Rom. 6 : 23. Matt. 10 : 28.) The rich man, immediately after his burial, was in hell in torments, and exclaimed : "I am tormented in this flame." (Luke 16 : 23.) A deliverance thence will for ever be denied him. He also feared, lest his five brethren would soon come to the same place of torment. The souls of the wicked, therefore, when leaving their bodies, are not carried into purgatory, where a way of escape may open itself to them, but they are cast into the unquenchable fire of hell.

III. What is the resurrection, and what are the errors which are entertained concerning it?

The word resurrection sometimes signifies in the Scriptures man's conversion, or his resurrection from sin, as, "This is the first resurrection." (Rev. 20 : 5.) But in this Article the resurrection of the body means the restitution of the substance of our bodies after death out of the very same matter of which they now consist, and the re-animating, or quickening of the same bodies with an incorruptible and immortal life by the same immortal soul, by which they now subsist; which God will effect through Christ at the end of the world, by his divine power and virtue, and which will result in the eternal glory of the elect, and the eternal punishment of the reprobate.

The resurrection, then, will consist, first, in the restoration of the same body, or the bringing together the mass or matter which now constitutes our bodies, but which, after death, is scattered, and dissolved in the different elements. Secondly, it will consist in the re-union of the body with the same soul which it had at first, by which it will also be quickened, and be made immortal. The resurrection will, in the last place, consist in the glorification of the elect, and the eternal banishment of the wicked from the presence of God.

There are three great errors in relation to the doctrine of the resurrection : 1. There are some who deny it altogether, and affirm that the soul dies with the body. This was the view which the Sadducees entertained, as is evident from what is said of them in Acts 23 : 8. "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor Spirit." 2. There are others who have admitted the immortality of the soul, but understand by the resurrection nothing more than regeneration. They deny that the bodies of the saints will rise, although their souls enjoy eternal felicity after death. The authors of this heresy seem to have been Hymeneus and Philetus, of whom Paul speaks : (2 Tim. 2 : 17, 18,) "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying, That the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." 3. Others again, as the

Anabaptists, deny that the very same bodies which we now have will rise again, and contend that God will create new bodies at the second coming of Christ. In opposition to all these errors, it becomes us to believe what the Scriptures affirm in relation to this subject, that the dead will most certainly rise again.

IV. From what does it appear that there will certainly be a future resurrection?

Philosophy may demonstrate the probability of a resurrection at some future time; but cannot establish the certainty of it; for the knowledge which we derive from philosophy of the justice and truth of God is partial and incomplete. The reasons, however, which the holy Scriptures adduce in support of the doctrine of the resurrection are solid and convincing; and it is from divine revelation alone, that the certainty of a future resurrection is demonstrated. In speaking upon this subject it is proper, therefore, that we should first adduce some of the passages of Scripture which affirm the certainty of the resurrection, and then present those arguments which may be drawn from the Scriptures in confirmation of the truth of this doctrine.

The Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, clearly reveal the doctrine of a future resurrection. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." "I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves." "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." "The hour is coming, in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." "I will raise him up at the last day." "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God," &c. "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them." (Job 19: 25, 26. Ez. 37: 12. Dan. 12: 2. John 5: 28; 6: 40. 1 Cor. 15: 13, 14. 1 Thes. 4: 14. Rev. 20: 12, 13.) To these testimonies, which the Scriptures furnish in support of the doctrine of a future resurrection, we may also add a number of arguments which are drawn from the word of God.

1. "God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and is the God of the living and not of the dead." (Matt. 22: 23.) But he would not be the God of Abraham as a whole, nor the God of the living, unless the body of Abraham should at some future time be raised from the dead. God is the God of man as a whole, and not merely of a part of his being. If the body, however, should never rise again he would be the God, not of the whole man, but only of a part. This is the argument which Christ employs against the Sadducees.

2. God promises eternal life to the righteous in respect both to the body and the soul; as he, on the other hand, threatens the wicked with eternal

punishment, which in like manner has respect both to the soul and the body. These promises and threatenings of God must be fulfilled; for their certainty is unchangeable. But they will not be fulfilled if the dead rise not. Seeing, therefore, that God does most assuredly, in his own time, effect what he promises to the righteous, and threatens to the wicked, it follows that the dead must necessarily rise.

3. Rewards and punishments extend to the whole man, because the whole man has sinned. Therefore the bodies of all shall rise — the righteous that they may enjoy that glory and felicity which God freely gives; and the wicked that they may endure punishment according to their deserts.

4. The mercy of God is perfect, and extends to the whole man, and desires that we should be wholly saved. Hence our bodies shall also rise again.

5. The love and mercy of God towards the righteous is constant and unchangeable, so that what he once wills to do for them out of his fatherly love, that he wills for ever. But he wills that the righteous shall be saved both in soul and body. Hence there is a necessity, that they should be saved under this form, which requires that they should rise again.

6. The perfect justice of God requires that the ungodly be punished according to the form under which they sin. But they sin in soul and body at the same time. It is necessary, therefore, that their bodies should also rise again, that they may be punished both in soul and body.

7. Christ has risen; therefore we also shall rise. This conclusion is proper and forcible: 1. Because Christ rose, that he might raise us. 2. Because Christ is the head, and we are his members. Inasmuch, therefore, as Christ our head has risen, we also who are his members shall, without doubt, rise again; because the glory of the head demands that the members be in the same condition with himself. If the members were to remain in a state of corruption the head would not, in this case, be glorious. 3. The same Spirit which dwells in Christ, dwells also in us: he joins and unites us with Christ, and works the same in us, which he does in Christ, because he is always the same. But he raised Christ; therefore he will also raise us.

8. It is declared that Christ shall have an everlasting kingdom. But this he would not have if our bodies were to remain for ever under the power of death. It would not be sufficient in this case, that our souls should be immortal; for that the kingdom of Christ might be everlasting, he must have subjects that are eternal in respect both to body and soul; from which we may again infer the necessity of the resurrection of the body.

9. Christ is a perfect Saviour; because he has saved, and reconciled the whole man to God. Hence our corrupt bodies will also be raised through Christ.

10. Christ is not less able to save, than Adam was to destroy; yea, he has by his death restored all, and more than that which was lost through the sin of Adam; for he has merited for us greater felicity than we should ever have had, if we had not sinned. Now Adam lost for us, the eternal life and salvation of the body with certain other gifts. Hence Christ has restored this unto us, from which it may be concluded that our bodies shall without doubt rise again.

11. God published his law to man after the fall. He, therefore, wills that man should at some time observe it. But this is not done in this life.

Hence it shall be done in the life to come, so that there must be a resurrection of the dead.

12. The wages of sin is death. When sin, therefore, is once abolished, death will also be abolished, which will result in the restoration of life.

13. Our bodies were made for this end, that the Holy Ghost might for ever dwell in them, and that they might be his temples. Hence they shall rise again and live for ever.

V. What kind of bodies shall rise in the Resurrection?

The bodies with which we shall rise in the resurrection, will not only be human bodies, but also the very same which we now have, and not other and different bodies created by Christ, as the Anabaptists affirm. Job says, "In my flesh shall I see God." (Job 19: 26.) The apostle Paul says, "Every one shall receive in his body according to that he hath done;" "and this mortal shall put on immortality." (Eph. 6: 8. 1 Cor. 15: 53.) It was, therefore, taught in the African churches: *I believe in the resurrection of this flesh.* The same thing may be argued from the import of the word *resurrection:* for nothing can rise again, except that which has fallen. "*This is the resurrection*," said Ambrose, "*as may be inferred from the import of the word itself, that that which fell may rise, and that what was dead may revive.*" The justice of God also establishes the same thing. "*For this*," said Ambrose, "*is the order and course of justice, that since every action is common both to the body and the soul, the body executing that to which the soul prompts, it is proper that both should come into judgment, and that both should either be given over to punishment, or crowned with glory.*" The justice of God demands that the bodies of the saints which have fought, should also be crowned; and that the wicked be punished in the same bodies in which they have blasphemed, and opposed God. Wherefore, there will be restored, in the resurrection, to every soul, not a strange and different body, but its own proper body—that which it here had—and shall thus be crowned with glory, or punished with shame. Finally, as Christ rose with the same body which he had when he died, so shall we also rise with the very body which we now have.

Obj. 1. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. These bodies of ours consist of flesh and blood. Therefore they cannot inherit the kingdom of God; consequently not these, but other bodies shall rise in the resurrection. Ans. There are here four terms; for flesh and blood as used by the Apostle, (1. Cor. 15: 50,) and understood in the first proposition of this syllogism, signify some evil quality adhering to the substance of the body, or the substance in respect to this quality; and in the second proposition these terms, signify the very substance of our bodies, from which the Anabaptists draw their conclusions, in relation to this subject. Or we may reply, that there is an incorrect chain of reasoning, in as much as this argument proceeds from a corrupt substance, to that which is pure, simple substance, in this manner; Flesh and blood being mortal and corrupt, as it now is, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Therefore flesh and blood, simply such, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But this does not legitimately follow. Hence flesh and blood, understanding by this, that which is sinful, and corrupt, cannot inherit the kingdom of God; but as glorified and immortal it shall obtain an entrance there. The Apostle

expressly teaches this when he says, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." (1. Cor. 15: 44.)

Obj. 2. The bodies with which we shall rise will be according to the Apostle, spiritual. Therefore they will not then have the properties of flesh. Ans. The apostle means by a spiritual body, not that which is changed into the Spirit, or which is in all its properties equal to the Spirit, but that which is ruled by the Spirit of God, which is immortal and free from all misery, adorned with heavenly splendor, glory, activity, strength and holiness. So he also calls a natural body, not that which is changed into the soul, or which is equal to it in all its properties; but that which in this mortal state is quickened, controlled, and directed by the soul. That this is the meaning of what Paul calls a spiritual body, is proven. 1. Because he says it is raised *a spiritual body;* but a spirit is no body. 2. He also adds, "this corruptible (body) must put on incorruption." 3. The body of Christ after his resurrection, had flesh and bones; and yet it was spiritual and glorious in the highest degree. Therefore, much more shall our spiritual bodies have flesh and bones. The interpretation which Augustin gives to these words of the Apostle is this, "*We must not imagine that because the Apostle says that the body which we shall have in the resurrection will be spiritual, that it will be purely spiritual without any body. But he calls that a spiritual body, which is wholly subject to the Spirit, and which is free from corruption and death; For when he calls the body which we now have, a natural body, we must not suppose that it is not a body, but a soul. Therefore as the body which we now have is called natural, because it is subject to the soul, and cannot be called spiritual, because it is not yet fully subject to the Spirit, as long as it may be corrupted, so it will then be called spiritual, when it will not be able with any corruption to resist the Spirit.*

VI. How will the Resurrection be effected?

The resurrection will be accomplished openly, and gloriously, and not secretly, nor hastily. It will be far different from that which occurred in relation to certain persons, when Christ rose from the dead. It will take place in the sight of angels, men and devils, and will be a scene of inexpressible joy to the righteous, but of unutterable anguish, and horror to the wicked. Christ shall descend from heaven, accompanied by the angels, with a shout, with the voice of the Arch-angel, and with the trumpet of God, at whose sound all the dead shall awake and come forth from their graves, and stand before the judgement seat of Jesus Christ. Those who will remain alive until the coming of Christ shall be suddenly changed from a state of mortality to immortality, which change will be to them in the place of death, and the resurrection. (Thes. 4: 14, 18. 1. Cor. 15: 50, 55.)

VII. When will the Resurrection take place?

The resurrection will take place at the end of the world, in the last day, according as it is said, "I will raise him up at the last day." "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." (John 6: 44; 11, 24.) But when the last day will arrive no one knows, but God alone. The chief benefit of this question is to restrain us from imagining to ourselves any time, when the resurrection will take place, that so we may not

disturb our faith, and begin to doubt when we find ourselves deceived in our vain conjectures.

VIII. By whose power, or through whom will the dead be raised?

The resurrection of the dead will be effected by the power of Christ as the mediator. "I will raise him up at the last day." This declaration of Christ must be understood of the body: because he will not raise up the soul, for this does not die. The man Christ will raise us by his human voice, and divine power, according as it is said, "The hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice." "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead." (John 5: 28. Acts 17: 31.) The use of this question is that our faith may be established in regard to this Article, from this, that he by whom the resurrection will be effected is possessed of sufficient power, seeing that he is the Almighty God, and also willing, in as much as he is our head. It is also a source of great comfort, from the fact that he will not be unmindful of his own flesh, and members, but will raise them up to eternal life, for which cause he assumed our nature and redeemed us.

Obj. But the Father is said to raise us; yea, he raised Christ himself: "He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 8: 11.) Therefore the dead shall neither be raised by Christ, nor by his power. Ans. The works of the Trinity which are external, being such as are performed upon creatures are common to all the persons of the Godhead, observing the order in which they operate. As the Father is, therefore, not excluded when the resurrection is ascribed to the Son, so the Son is not excluded when the Father, or the Holy Ghost are said to raise the dead. The Father shall raise us mediately through the Son. The Son shall raise us immediately by his Spirit, as our redeemer and judge. "We look for the Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." (Phil. 3: 20; 21. John 5: 21.) The Holy Spirit shall raise us immediately by himself. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead," &c. (Rom. 8: 11.)

IX. For what purpose, and to what state will the dead be raised?

The ultimate end of the resurrection of the dead is the glory of God; for he will then manifest and exercise his mercy in its highest form in the glorification of the faithful, whilst his justice will be displayed in the damnation of the reprobate; and thus he will declare the certainty of his promises and threatenings in relation to both. *The next end*, and the one that is subordinate to the former, is the salvation and glory of the elect; and on the other hand the punishment and rejection of the reprobate: for the former shall be raised to eternal life, whilst the latter shall come forth to everlasting punishment according as it is said: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." "And shall come forth, they that have done good,

unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." "I will grant to sit with me on my throne." "They are arrayed in white robes." "The righteous shall shine forth as the sun." "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels, &c.; and these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." (Dan. 12: 2. John 5: 28. Rev. 3: 21; 7: 13. Matt. 13: 43; 25: 41, 46.) This will be the state and condition to which the dead will be raised.

Obj. The resurrection of Christ is declared by the Apostle to be the cause of our resurrection, and our resurrection is the effect, or benefit of Christ's resurrection. But this cause does not extend to the wicked. Therefore they will not rise. Ans. Although the wicked will not rise because of the resurrection of Christ, yet they shall, nevertheless, be raised on account of the just judgment of God, by which they shall be consigned to everlasting punishment. For there may be many and different causes, (if not in number, at least in kind,) especially in different subjects, of one and the same effect. The cause of the resurrection of the godly is, therefore, the resurrection of Christ as of the head. But the resurrection of Christ is not the cause of the resurrection of the wicked, because they are not members of Christ, but the justice of God, and the truth of his threatening. Briefly; the wicked shall rise from the dead, not because Christ rose, but on account of the justice of God, that they may be punished. There is indeed but one end of the resurrection of all in respect to God, which is his glory; but the manner in which this end is reached is different.

Question 58. What comfort takest thou from the article of "life everlasting?"

Answer. That since I now feel in my heart the beginning of eternal joy, after this life I shall inherit perfect salvation, which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man" to conceive; and that, to praise God therein forever.

EXPOSITION.

This Article stands at the end of the Creed; 1. Because its perfect fulfillment comes after the rest. 2. Because it is the effect of all the other articles; for it is on account of this that all the preceding articles are believed, and all the things which we believe in the others were done in order that we might believe this last, and so enjoy eternal life. This article is, therefore, the crowning point of our entire salvation and life. The questions which are chiefly to be discussed in connection with this subject are such as the following:

I. *What is everlasting life?*
II. *By whom is it given?*
III. *To whom is it given?*
IV. *Why is it given?*
V. *How is it given?*
VI. *When is it given?*
VII. *Whether, and whence we may be assured of it in this life?*

I. What is everlasting life?

This question seems at first inexplicable, especially in view of what the Apostle says concerning it: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Cor. 2: 9.) We may, however, form some faint idea of what eternal life is, from the analogy of life, of which philosophers are wont to dispute much, and of which the Scriptures also speak. The term life is variously defined by philosophers. It may in general be defined as the very being of that which lives, when used in reference to God, angels, and living beings and plants. Spirits also live; but have not their existence from any quickening soul, but from their essence or nature. In creatures, however, possessed of a soul, life is properly the being of that which lives, which is the same thing as to be endowed with a soul, or to have in oneself a living soul. For the soul is that by which such a being lives; or it is the essential form of life, by which those live who are endowed therewith. It is taken for the first and second actions; that is, for the very being, action or living, and for the acting of a living thing. We may now define life more fully thus: natural life is the existence or dwelling of the soul in a body which is animated, and the acting of a living being. Or, it is the perfection (ἐντελέχεια) of the soul accomplishing those works which are proper to that which has life. Or, finally, it is the adaptedness of a living being to effect such things as are proper to itself; and is also the things themselves by virtue of the union which exists between the body and the soul.

That is called *everlasting*, 1. Which is without beginning or end, as God is. 2. That which is without a beginning, but which has an end, as the decrees of God. 3. That which has a beginning, but will have no end, as the angels, &c. It is in this third sense that our heavenly life is called everlasting, by which we mean, that whilst it has a beginning, it will have no end. The everlasting life of man, then, is the eternal being of man, regenerated and glorified, which will consist in having the image of God perfectly restored in him, as it was when he was first created, having perfect wisdom, righteousness, and happiness, or being endowed with the true knowledge and love of God, in connection with eternal joy. And here for the sake of plainness we shall include among these *acts* the *powers* themselves of knowing and loving God; for to *be able* rightly to know and love God, belongs equally as much to spiritual life as to know and love him, inasmuch as the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. (1 Cor. 2: 14.) Or, we may again define it thus: everlasting life is the perfect restoration of the image of God, with eternal joy and delight in God, heavenly glory, and the full fruition of all those good things which are necessary to a state of perfect happiness. In a word, it is the perfect conformity of man with God, consisting in the true and perfect knowledge and love of God, and in the glory both of the soul and body of man. These two things must then be considered in order that we may have a proper idea of what constitutes everlasting life: 1. A union of both our body and soul with God. 2. A conformity with God, which flows out of this union as an effect proceeds from its cause; which conformity consists in a clear and correct knowledge of God, together with his will and works; in righteousness, perfect joy and delight in God, inexpressible glory with which our

bodies shall be irradiated, and shine as the sun, and a sufficiency of all good things pertaining to true and perfect happiness. These things do in some small degree express the substance and form of everlasting life, to which if we add the efficient and final causes, we may arrive at this more complete and full definition. *Everlasting life* consists in the eternal habitation of God in the faithful through the Holy Spirit; in a true and perfect knowledge of God, and of his works and will, kindled in the heart immediately by the same Spirit; in true and perfect wisdom and righteousness, together with a perfect conformity of all the strength and powers of the mind and will, with the mind and will of God, having respect both to the body and soul, which joy is freely given of God, by and for the sake of Christ, and is begun already in this life, to be fully perfected in the life to come, that so God may to all eternity be praised and glorified by his saints.

All the different parts of this definition are in accordance with the teachings of God's word, as may be easily shown. That it will include the eternal indwelling of God in his people, through the Holy Spirit, is testified in these words: "We will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." (John 14: 23, 16.) It will include the knowledge of God, and perfect wisdom, according as it is said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (John 17: 3.) Eternal life will embrace perfect righteousness, for those that shall obtain it, "are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." (Luke 20: 36.) So there will be joy and delight in God, for it is said, "Your joy no man taketh from you." (John 16: 22.) There will also be an abundance of all good things, for "God shall be all in all." "I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple of it. "And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." (1 Cor. 15: 28. Rev. 21: 22, 23.) The good things which we now enjoy in part only, will then be perfected; for "When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Cor. 13: 10.) It will, lastly, be without any interruption or end; for "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." "Of his kingdom there shall be no end." "Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom," that is, having no beginning nor end. (Rev. 21: 4. Luke 1: 33. Dan. 7: 27.)

Obj. To enjoy everlasting life is to live for ever. But the wicked also live for ever; for they shall be raised immortal. Therefore they shall also have everlasting life. Ans. This conclusion is drawn from an imperfect definition of eternal life, and is thus of no force. For eternal life does not merely mean immortality, or a continued presence of the soul in the body; but also, and more particularly, that spiritual life, and heavenly glory and felicity, which the Holy Ghost works in the faithful by his own peculiar operation. Now although the wicked, after the resurrection, will be immortal, yet their natural life shall be no life, but eternal death; for with this life there will be joined, 1. An eternal rejection of God. 2. A want of the knowledge and grace of God. 3. Everlasting and unutterable torments. "Their worm dieth not." "There shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth." (Mark 9: 44. Matt. 24: 51.) From these things we may understand what eternal death is; and that it is so called, not because the

wicked by dying once, are freed therefrom, but because they shall die for ever, and experience torments that shall never have an end.

II. By whom is everlasting life given?

God alone grants eternal life, as it is said, "the gift of God is eternal life." (Rom. 6: 23.) God the Father, as the author and fountain of all life, grants eternal life through the Son and Holy Spirit; the Son grants it through the Holy Spirit; and the Spirit through himself, which order of working is natural to the persons of the Godhead. Of the Father it is said: "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them." "As the Father hath life in himself." (John 5: 21, 26.) Of the Son it is said: "Even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." "So hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." "In him was life." "The everlasting Father," (or the Father of eternity.) "I give unto them eternal life." (John 5: 21, 26; 1: 4. Is. 9: 6. John 10: 28.) Of the Holy Ghost it is said: "Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (John 3: 5. Rom. 8: 11.) These testimonies are to be observed, inasmuch as they establish the Divinity of the Son, and Holy Ghost, and prove their equality with the Father.

Obj. 1. But the ministers of the gospel also give eternal life, for, says Paul, "In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." "In doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." (1 Cor. 4: 15. 1 Tim. 4: 16.) Therefore others besides God grant eternal life. Ans. There may be many subordinate causes of the same effect. Christ and the Holy Spirit grant life by their own power. But ministers are merely the instruments through whom Christ works by the power of his Spirit. "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed." (1 Cor. 4: 1; 3: 5.)

Obj. 2. But Christ also grants life by a power communicated to him. Therefore it is not his own. Ans. Christ gives life by a communicated power; but it is communicated by natural and eternal generation. Hence we may reply, that he grants life by a power communicated to him by eternal generation from the Father. Therefore he grants it by his own power. "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." (John 5: 26.)

III. To whom is eternal life given?

Eternal life is given from everlasting to all, and only the elect, or such as are converted in this life. "I give unto them eternal life." "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." "Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition." "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "No man can come to me, except the Father draw him." "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called," &c. (John 10: 28; 17: 9, 12. Matt. 25: 34. John 6: 44. Rom. 8: 30.) Faith and repentance are peculiar to the elect. But these

constitute the beginning of eternal life. Therefore eternal life pertains to the elect only. "The election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11: 7.) We may here remark that when the question is, To whom is eternal life given? it is better to reply, to the elect, than to such as are converted; for conversion and faith are but the beginning of eternal life. To say, therefore, that eternal life is given to such as are converted, is the same, as if we were to say, that life is given to the living. When it is asked, To whom the beginning of eternal life is given? we answer correctly to the elect; for if we were to say, it is given to such as are converted, we beg the question; seeing that the question is, Whom does God convert?

IV. Wherefore is Eternal Life given?

Eternal life is not given on account of our works, whether present, or foreseen; but only out of the free mercy, and love of God toward the human race, and from his desire to manifest his mercy in the salvation of the righteous, through the satisfaction and merits of Christ the mediator, imputed unto us through faith, for this end, that God may be eternally praised by us. "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast: for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works," &c. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," &c. (Rom. 6: 23. Eph. 2: 8, 9, 10. John 3: 16.) The moving cause on account of which eternal life is given us, is not any work of ours whether present, or foreseen; for before the beginning of eternal life, or which is the same thing, before our conversion to God, all our works deserve eternal death; and after our conversion they are the effects of it; and so cannot be the cause why eternal life is given, as nothing can be the cause of itself. We are indeed led to eternal life by many means; but the means through which we are led to God constitute one thing, and the cause for which we are led, is another thing. The final cause for which eternal life is given, is that we may praise and magnify the mercy of God. "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. 1: 6.) God grants us eternal life for the same reason, for which he chose us.

V. How is Eternal Life given?

Everlasting life is given us through faith; and faith by the doctrine of the gospel, and the inward efficacy of the Holy Spirit; for the Holy Spirit works in us, through the word, the knowledge of God, and of his will; which knowledge is accompanied with a desire of becoming more and more intimately acquainted with God, and of living according to the requirements of his will, as it is said: "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." "In Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel." "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (John 6: 68. 1. Cor. 4: 15. Rom. 1: 16; 10: 17.) The ordinary way in which we receive the beginning of eternal life is through the ministry of the word. It is different, however, with the infants of the church and those who are

converted in a miraculous manner, as the Thief on the cross, Paul, Cornelius, &c. Our remarks at this time have respect to the ordinary way, in which everlasting life is given, and which is peculiar to adults.

VI. When is Eternal Life given?

The beginning of everlasting life is given already in this world; but the consummation of it, is reserved for the life to come, which none receive, but those in whom it is here begun. Hence it is said, "In this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon, with our house which is from heaven; if so be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked." "Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not from him shall be taken away, even that he hath." (2 Cor. 5: 23. Matt. 13: 12.)

There are two degrees in the consummation of eternal life. The one is when the souls of the righteous, being freed from the body, are immediately carried into heaven; for in death they obtain a deliverance from all the evils of this life. The other is that greater, and more glorious degree to which we shall attain in the resurrection of our bodies, when we shall ascend into heaven perfectly redeemed and glorified, and see God as he is, face to face. "He that heareth my word, and believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." (John 5: 24. 1. John 3: 3.)

VII. Whether, and whence may we be assured of Everlasting Life?

It is not only possible, but also our duty to assure ourselves of everlasting life; for it is given to all and only to such as believe. And not only so, but to believe in everlasting life is to be fully persuaded that not only shall others be made partakers of it, but that I am also a partaker of it, which we must observe, and hold fast to in opposition to the distrust and uncertainty of the Papists. We should be certain of our final perseverance; for it is said: "Being justified by faith we have peace with God." "I give unto them eternal life," which could not be said if there were any doubt or uncertainty in regard to it, so that it might be lost. "The gifts and callings of God are without repentance." "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands." "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (Rom. 5: 1. John 10: 28. Rom. 11: 20. Phil. 1: 6. 2. Tim. 1: 12.) He that believes knows that he does believe, which assurance is based upon these solid arguments: 1. God, who is the author of everlasting life is unchangeable. 2. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." (2. Tim. 2: 19.) 3. Christ is heard in all those things, which he asks of the Father. Now one thing for which he prays, is that the Father would keep all those whom he has given him. 4. God will not have us to ask of him those things necessary for our salvation conditionally, but positively, because he has promised it. Hence to doubt in regard

to our perseverance, and the consummation of eternal life is to overthrow the truth of God, and to make the intercession of Christ unavailing.

But whence may we be assured of the consummation of everlasting life? We reply from the fact that we have already the beginning of it: for to him that hath shall be given. The gifts of God are without repentance. God is faithful: and therefore he will perfect that which he has commenced. We are assured of the beginning of eternal life from the presence of a true faith, which, whilst it resists the doubts, and temptations of the devil, exclaims, "Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief." (Mark 9: 24.) The same assurance is also obtained by the peace of conscience which we have with God, being justified by faith: and from the true repentance and sincere purpose of heart which we have to obey all the commandments of God: for faith cannot be without true repentance. "Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." (Heb. 3: 6, 14.)

That which has now been spoken concerning this Article explains sufficiently, what it is to believe, *the life everlasting;* which may be said to include a firm persuasion, 1. That after this life, there will be another life in which the church shall be glorified, and God praised for ever. 2. That I am also a member of this church, and shall for this reason be made a partaker of everlasting life. 3. That I also in this life have the *beginning of everlasting life.*

TWENTY-THIRD LORD'S DAY.

Question 59. But what doth it profit thee now, that thou believest all this?

Answer. That I am righteous in Christ, before God, and an heir of eternal life.

Question 60. How art thou righteous before God?

Answer. Only by a true faith in Jesus Christ; so that, though my conscience accuse me that I have grossly transgressed all the commands of God, and kept none of them, and am still inclined to all evil; notwithstanding God, without any merit of mine, but only of mere grace, grants and imputes to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ; even so, as if I never had had, nor committed any sin; yea, as if I had fully accomplished all that obedience which Christ hath accomplished for me; inasmuch as I embrace such benefit with a believing heart.

EXPOSITION.

The doctrine of justification, which now follows, is one of the chief articles of our faith, not only because it treats of those things which are fundamental, but also because it is most frequently called in question by heretics. The controversies between the church and heretics have respect principally to two points: the one is concerning God, and the other concerning the justification of man in the sight of God. And such is the importance of these doctrines that if either one of them be overthrown,

the other parts of our faith easily fall to pieces. Hence it becomes necessary for us to fortify and establish ourselves, especially in these doctrines, against all the assaults of heretics. Concerning the doctrine of justification (for we have already spoken of the doctrine concerning God) of which the above questions of the Catechism treat, the following things are to be considered:

I. *What is righteousness in general?*
II. *How mani-fold is it?*
III. *In what does righteousness differ from justification?*
IV. *What is our righteousness before God?*
V. *In what manner does it become ours, seeing it is without us?*
VI. *Why is it made ours, or wherefore does God impute it unto us for righteousness?*

I. What is Righteousness in general?

Righteousness is derived from right, which is the law, and is a conformity with the law, as sin or unrighteousness is the transgression of the law. It may be defined in general, as consisting in a conformity with God and the divine law; although a definition can hardly be given so general as to agree at the same time with God and creatures. Uncreated righteousness is God himself, the foundation, and rule or pattern of all righteousness. Created righteousness is an effect of uncreated or divine righteousness in rational creatures. Righteousness, therefore, in general, as far as it has respect to creatures, consists in fulfilling those laws which pertain to rational creatures; or, it is a conformity on the part of rational creatures with those laws which have respect to them. Finally, righteousness is the fulfillment of the law, and a conformity with the law is righteousness itself. This must be observed and held fast to, because our justification can only be effected by fulfilling the law. Evangelical righteousness is the fulfilling of the law, and does not conflict with it in the least. The gospel does not abolish the law, but establishes it.

II. How mani-fold is Righteousness, or Justice?

Righteousness is in general either *uncreated*, as God himself is righteous, or it is *created*, as is the righteousness which belongs to rational creatures. *Created righteousness* is legal and evangelical. By *legal righteousness* we mean the fulfilling of the law by one, who is thereby declared righteous; or it is such a fulfilling of the law as that which is accomplished by one's own obedience; or it is a comformity to the law which he has who is declared righteous. This legal righteousness was the righteousness of Adam before the fall, and is in the angels, and in Christ as far as he is man. *Evangelical righteousness* is the fulfilling of the law, performed, not by us, but by another in our stead, and imputed unto us of God by faith.

Legal righteousness is performed, either by obedience to the law, or by punishment. The law requires one or the other. That which is performed by obedience is either universal or particular. *Universal* is the observing of all those laws which have respect to us; or it is obedience to all the laws which pertain to us. This righteousness is again of two kinds, perfect and imperfect. The former consists in internal and external obedience to all those laws which have respect to us; or it consists in perfect

conformity with the law, as it is said: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." (Deut. 27: 26.) By a righteousness that is *imperfect*, we mean that conformity with the law which is only begun, and which does not comply with all the requirements of the law, nor perform them in the manner which it prescribes. This righteousness consists also of two kinds, philosophical and christian. *Philosophical* is a knowledge of the law of God, and of virtue, which is imperfect, indistinct and small, and a certain purpose of the will and heart to do those things which are right as far as that knowledge extends, together with a course of conduct in accordance with the law. *Christian righteousness* consists in regeneration, or a knowledge of God and the divine law, imperfect, indeed, but yet more excellent and perfect than that which is philosophical, grounding itself in faith and the love of God, which the Holy Ghost kindles in the minds and hearts of the faithful through the gospel, and which is at the same time joined with a sincere desire to obey God according to all his commandments. This form of righteousness belongs properly to those who are regenerated, and flows from a justifying faith. That righteousness which is *particular* is that which renders to every one his own, and is either commutative as distributive. The former is that which preserves an equality in contracts, or in the exchange of things and their prices. *Distributive justice* is that which preserves a proportion in the distribution of offices, honors, goods, rewards and punishments, rendering to every one according to his just desert. Let the husbandman till the ground, the statesman direct the affairs of the republic, and the theologian instruct the church, and let rewards be given to the good, and punishments be inflicted upon the evil: "Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; honor to whom honor." (Rom. 13: 7.)

Righteousness is also distinguished from the subjects into that of the person, and the cause. *Righteousness of the person* is when a person is just and conformable to the law; and that of the *cause* is when a person has a just and good cause in controversy, whether he himself be good or bad. David often comforts himself with this in the book of the Psalms. It is otherwise called the righteousness of a good conscience.

III. In what does Righteousness differ from Justification?

Righteousness is conformity with the law; or, it is the fulfilling of the law, or that by which we are justified before God. *Justification*, on the other hand, is the application of this righteousness to any one. They differ, therefore, as shape and the application of it to an object, or as whiteness and whitening, or making white. Justification admits of the same division which we have made of righteousness, into that which is legal and evangelical. *Legal justification* consists in effecting in us conformity with God and the law. This is commenced in us when we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. *Evangelical justification* is the application of evangelical righteousness; or, it is the application of the righteousness of another, which is without us in Christ; or, it is the imputation and application of that righteousness which Christ wrought out for us by his death upon the cross, and by his resurrection from the dead. It is not a transfusion of righteousness, or of the qualities thereof; but it is the acquitting, or the declaring us free from sin in the judgment of God,

on the ground of the righteousness of another. Justification and the forgiveness of sins are, therefore, the same: for to justify is that God should not impute sin unto us, but accept of us and declare us righteous; or, which is the same thing, that he declare us righteous on the ground of the righteousness of Christ made over unto us. That this is the proper signification of the word is clear from these passages of Scripture in which it occurs: "In thy sight shall no man living be justified," that is, no one shall be acquitted, or declared just by inherent righteousness. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity," &c. (Ps. 143: 2; 31: 1, 2.) Paul, in accordance with this declaration of the Psalmist, interprets justification to be the remission of sins, where the word *impute* is repeated seven times. (Rom. 4: 7.)

Obj. He that is righteous is conformable to the law. To justify is to make righteous. Therefore to justify is to make the subject thereof conformable to the law. Ans. We grant the whole argument. To justify is to make the subject of it conformable to the law, either in himself, by a righteousness which is called his own, and which is inherent, infused and legal; or it is to be made righteous in another which is called imputed righteousness, the righteousness of faith, of the gospel, and of another, because it is not inherent in us, but in Christ. This consists also in conformity with the law; for faith does not make void the law, but establishes it. And such we may remark is our righteousness and justification; for we now speak of that righteousness with which we as sinners are justified before God in this life; and not of that by which we shall be accounted righteous in another life, or by which we would have been righteous had we not sinned.

IV. What is our Righteousness before God?

The righteousness with which we are here justified before God, is not our conformity with the law, nor our good works, nor our faith; but it is the satisfaction which Christ rendered to the law in our stead; or the punishment which he endured in our behalf; and therefore the entire humiliation of Christ, from the moment of his conception to his glorification, including his assumption of humanity, his subjection to the law, his poverty, reproach, weakness, sufferings, death, &c., all of which he did willingly; yea, whatever he did and suffered to which he was not bound, as being righteous, and the Son of God, is all included in the satisfaction which he made for us, and in the righteousnoss which God graciously imputes to us, and all believers. This satisfaction is equivalent to the fulfilling of the law, or to the endurance of eternal punishment for sin, to one or the other of which the law binds all. "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "Ye are complete in him." "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." "With his stripes we are healed." "He was bruised for our iniquities." "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." "Being justified freely, by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven." "Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath

through him." "We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." "He redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 Cor. 2 : 2. Col. 2 : 10. Rom. 5 : 19. Is. 53 : 5, 6. Luke 22 : 20. Rom. 3 : 24, 25 ; 4 : 7 ; 5 : 9, 10. 2 Cor. 8 : 9. Gal. 3 : 13. Eph. 1 : 7. 1 John 1 : 7.) Christ fulfilled the law by the holiness of his human nature, and by his obedience, even unto the death of the cross. The holiness of his human nature was necessary to his obedience ; for it became our mediator to be holy and righteous in himself, that he might be able to perform obedience, and make satisfaction for us. "For such an High Priest became us, who is holy," &c. (Heb. 7 : 26.) This obedience now is our righteousness, and it is upon the ground of this that God is pleased with us. The blood of Christ is the satisfaction on account of which God receives us into his favor, and which he imputes unto us, as it is said, *the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin*, both of commission and omission. The shedding of his blood is the complement of his satisfaction, and is for this reason called our righteousness.

The questions, How can a rational creature be righteous before God? how can man, being a sinner, be just before God? and whether a rational creature can merit any thing at the hands of God? are to be distinguished from each other. We reply to the first question, that a rational creature may be just before God by an inherent conformity with the law, as the angels, and those that are blessed. To the second question we reply, that man as a sinner can be regarded as righteous only on the ground of the imputation of Christ's merits ; and this is the question of which we speak when treating the subject of justification. That man cannot be declared righteous upon the ground of his works is evident from this, that his works are unholy before his justification — that after his justification they are also imperfect, and that if they were perfect as they will be in another life, they could nevertheless, not satisfy for those sins which are past, and which still stand against us. To the third question we answer that man can merit nothing from God, for it is said, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, "We are unprofitable servants ; we have done that which was our duty to do." (Luke 17 : 10.) Nor is the obedience of Christ meritorious in this respect, as though it added any thing to God, but it is called meritorious on account of the dignity of his person, because he who suffered was the Son of God.

V. How does the Satisfaction of Christ become our Righteousness, seeing that it is without us?

At first view it seems absurd that we should be justified by any thing without us, or by something that belongs to another. It is necessary, therefore, that we should explain more fully how the satisfaction, or obedience of Christ becomes ours ; for unless it be made ours, or be applied unto us, we cannot be justified by it, just as little as a wall can be white, if whiteness be not applied, or fixed upon it. We remark, then, that there are two ways in which the satisfaction of Christ is made over unto us: 1. God himself applies it unto us, that is, he makes the righteousness of

Christ over unto us, and accepts of us as righteous on account of it, as if it were ours. 2. We apply it also unto ourselves when we receive the righteousness of Christ through faith, that is, we rest assured that God will grant it unto us, that he will regard us as righteous on account of it, and that he will free us from all guilt. There is, therefore, a double application; one in respect to God, and another in respect to us. The former is the imputation of Christ's righteousness, when God accepts of that righteousness which Christ wrought out, that it might avail in our behalf, and accounts us as righteous in view of it, as much so as if we had never sinned, or had at least fully satisfied for our sins. The other side of this application which has respect to us, is the act itself of believing, in which we are fully persuaded that it is imputed and given unto us. Both sides of this application must necessarily concur in our justification; for God applies the righteousness of Christ unto us upon the condition, that we also apply the same unto ourselves by faith. For although any one were to offer another a benefit, yet if he to whom it is offered does not accept of it, it is not applied unto him, and so does not become his. Hence without this last application the former is of no account. And yet our application of the righteousness of Christ is from God; for he first imputes it unto us, and then works faith in us, by which we apply unto ourselves that which is imputed; from which it appears that the application of God precedes that which we make, (which is of faith) and is the cause of it, although it is not without ours, as Christ says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." (John 15: 16.)

From what we have now said in regard to the application of the righteousness of Christ it appears, *first*, that it is no absurdity to say that we are justified by the righteousness of another; for the righteousness which is applied unto us by faith, and for which we are regarded as righteous, is not simply another's, but is made ours by application. The subject, indeed, in which this righteousness is found is Christ; but we are the object to which it has reference, inasmuch as it is imputed unto us. *Secondly*, the term imputation is not so comprehensive in its signification as application; for whilst the former is used in relation to God alone, the latter is used also in respect to us. *Thirdly*, that God applies the righteousness of Christ unto us in one way, and we apply it in another. God applies it by imputation whilst we apply it by faith, or by accepting of it. *Fourthly*, that to justify, in the sense in which the church uses the phrase, does not mean legally, which is to make one that is unjust, just, by infusing in him the qualities of righteousness; but evangelically, which is to regard one that is unrighteous, as righteous, and to absolve him from guilt, and not to punish him, all of which is done on account of the satisfaction of another imputed unto him. It is in this sense that the Scriptures use the phrase, which may also be said of almost every language. In the Hebrew language it signifies to acquit one that is guilty, or to declare him innocent. "I will not justify the wicked." "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord." (Gen. 23: 7. Prov. 17: 15.) So the Greek word δικαιοω signifies sometimes to regard, or to declare one righteous, and again it means to inflict punishment, the cause being known by a proper trial, as Suidas observes. It is in this last sense that Christ says, "By thy words thou shalt be justified." (Matt. 12: 37.) The former signification is used in two ways in the Scriptures. It

signifies either, not to condemn, but to acquit on trial: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" "It is God that justifieth." "He went down justified, rather than the other." (Rom. 8: 33. Luke 18: 14.) Or it signifies to recognise and declare one righteous. "Wisdom is justified of all her children." "That thou mightest be justified when thou speaketh." (Luke 7: 35. Ps. 51: 6.) Both significations, however, are reduced to the same thing. But the phrase, to justify, is never used among the Latins, and especially not by Latin authors in the sense of making holy, or of infusing a habit of righteousness. And it is evidently used in a different sense in the Scriptures, as the following passages clearly prove, which cannot be understood otherwise than of the acquital, and free acceptance of the sinner. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" "It is God that justifieth." "The publican went down justified," that is, absolved from guilt, and accepted of God rather than the Pharisee. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13: 39.) To justify in this last passage manifestly means to acquit, and to receive the forgiveness of sins. "Being justified freely by his grace." "That he might be the justifier of him that believeth." "We conclude that a man is justified without works." "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." "Being justified by his blood." (Rom. 3: 24, 26, 28; 4: 5; 5: 9.)

VI. Why is the satisfaction of Christ made ours, or wherefore does God impute it unto us for Righteousness?

God, out of his mere mercy and grace, imputes and applies unto us the righteousness of Christ, as he also predestinated us from everlasting to this grace, and freely chose us in Christ, as those to whom he might in his own time apply this righteousness "according to the good pleasure of his will," as Paul says, (Eph. 1: 5) not having been moved thereto by any goodness or holiness which he foresaw would be in us. And the reason of this arises from the fact, that there can be no goodness in us, except God first produce it. Hence all thoughts of merit on our part must be abandoned as inconsistent with the grace of God, and as a denial of it; for the mercy and grace of God constitute the sole cause of each form of the application of the righteousness of Christ. God out of his infinite goodness applies, and makes over unto us the merits of Christ, that we may apply the same unto ourselves. The cause, therefore, on account of which this application is made is in God alone, and not at all in us, for it can neither be any thing foreseen in us, nor even the apprehension or reception of this righteousness itself. Whatever goodness there may be in us is the effect of the application of the merits of Christ; for "What hast thou that thou didst not receive." "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God." (1 Cor. 4: 7. Eph. 2: 8.)

Christ then presents himself in various ways for our justification: 1. As the subject, and the ground of our righteousness. 2. As the moving cause; because he obtains it. 3. As the chief, and efficient cause; because he, together with the Father, justifies and gives us faith, by which we believe and receive it. *The mercy of God* is the moving cause of our justification as far as it respects God; *the satisfaction of Christ* is the

formal cause; whilst our *faith is the instrumental cause*, apprehending and applying to ourselves the righteousness of Christ. We must observe, therefore, that it cannot be said that we are justified in the same sense by the grace of God, by the merits of Christ, and by faith. The first must be understood of the moving cause, which is in God; the second of the formal cause, which is in Christ; and the third of the instrumental cause, which is in us. We are justified by the *mercy or grace of God*, as the chief moving cause, by which God was led to justify and save us. We are justified by *the merits of Christ*, partly as by the formal cause of our justification, inasmuch as God accepts of us in view of the obedience of Christ applied unto us, and account us as righteous seeing that we are covered with this, as with a garment; and partly as the moving and meritorious cause, inasmuch as God on account of this, acquits and frees us from the condemnation of the law. We are justified by faith, as by an instrumental cause, by which we apprehend the righteousness of Christ imputed unto us.

It is commonly said, that we are justified by faith correlatively, by which it is meant that we are justified by that which faith has respect to, which is the merit of Christ; or by that which it apprehends: for faith and the satisfaction of Christ have a mutual relation to each other; the one is that which receives, and the other is that which is received. This form of speech is correctly used, because when we thus speak, faith is understood to mean the formal cause of our justification, and the sense is, that the merit of Christ justifies us, and not faith; or that we are justified by that which is apprehended, and not by the instrument which apprehends. But justification may also be correctly attributed to faith, as the instrumental cause, without any such relation, for we may correctly say that we are justified by faith, meaning by it, that we are justified by it as a means: for the effect of an efficient cause is ordinarily attributed to the instrument. But when it is said, "faith is counted for righteousness," (Rom. 4: 5.) and when expressions of a similar character are used, they must necessarily be understood correlatively, in as much as faith is the instrument by which we apprehend the righteousness of Christ, or it is the hand with which we receive the righteousness of Christ.

Question. 61. Why sayest thou that thou art righteous by faith only?

Answer. Not that I am acceptable to God on account of the worthiness of my faith, but because only the satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ is my righteousness before God, and that I cannot receive and apply the same to myself any other way than by faith only?

EXPOSITION.

We are said to be justified by faith only:

1. Because we are justified by the object of faith alone, that is by the merits of Christ only, without which we can have no righteousness whatever: for we are justified for Christ's sake. Nothing but the merit of Christ can be our righteousness in the sight of God, either as a whole, or a part only. We are justified only by believing, and receiving the righteousness of another, and not by our own works, or merit. All works are excluded from our justification, yea even faith itself in as far as it is a virtue, or work.

2. Because the act which belongs properly to faith is to apprehend, and apply to itself the righteousness of Christ; yea, faith is nothing else than the acceptance itself, or the apprehension of the merits of Christ.

3. Because faith alone is the instrument which apprehends the satisfaction of Christ. Hence it is plain, why the exclusive particle *only* should be added, as it is in the Catechism, and be maintained against the Papist. It is done, 1. For the purpose of expressing what Paul affirms when he says: "We are justified freely by his grace, without the deeds of the laws:" And what Christ says; "only believe." (Rom. 4: 24, 28. Mark. 5: 36.) 2. That all our own works, and merits, as well as those of others, may be excluded as being the cause of our justification, that faith may be understood correlatively. We are justified *by faith only*, that is, by the merits of Christ alone. 3. That not only all our merits, but that even faith itself may be excluded from that which is received by faith; so that when we say, we are justified by *faith only*, the sense is, that it is not by meriting, but only by receiving; as when it is said, This beggar is enriched only by receiving alms, all works and merits are excluded therefrom, yea, even the very acceptance of alms, in as far as it is viewed as a merit. It is for this reason, that Paul always says, that we are justified *by faith, and through faith*, as by an instrument; and never *on account of faith*, as the Papists will have it, who indeed admit both forms of expression, as if faith might be the application of Christ's righteousness, and be also at the same time a certain work, or merit, by which we are counted worthy of being declared righteous, which is directly opposed to the very nature of faith. For if we were justified on account of our faith, then faith would no longer be the acceptance of the righteousness of another, but it would be the merit, and cause of our own righteousness; neither would it receive the satisfaction of another, for it would no longer stand in need of it. 4. That we may understand the necessity of faith for our justification, and may know that we are justified, not by the merit of faith, but yet just as little without faith, to receive the righteousness of Christ; because it is the province of faith to appropriate this to itself. 5. The orthodox Fathers often use the same form of speech, *by faith only*. Origen writes: "The Apostles say, *that the justification* OF FAITH ONLY *is sufficient, so that if any one* ONLY BELIEVES, *he may be justified, even though he does not perform any works.*" Ambrose says: "*They are justified freely, who, without working or rendering any thing in turn, are justified* BY FAITH ONLY *as the gift of God.*" Again; "*How can the Jews suppose that they are justified by the works of the law, seeing they have the justification of Abraham set before them, who was justified, not by the works of the law, but* BY FAITH ONLY. *The law, therefore, is not necessary, when the sinner is justified before God by* FAITH ONLY." And again. "*God has decreed that he who believes in Christ, should be saved without works, receiving the remission of sins freely* BY FAITH ONLY." We are therefore justified *by faith only*, which means that it is by the merits of Christ alone, apprehended by faith.

This we must firmly maintain, and believe: 1. For the glory of God, that so the sacrifice of Christ may not be impaired. 2. For our comfort, that we may be assured that our righteousness does not depend upon our works, (for if this were the case we should lose it thousands of times,) but upon the sacrifice and merit of Christ alone.

Question. 62. But why cannot our good works be the whole or part of our righteousness before God?

Answer. Because that the righteous which can be approved of before the tribunal of God, must be absolutely perfect, and in all respects conformable to the divine law, and, also, that our best works in this life are all imperfect and defiled with sin.

EXPOSITION.

Thus far we have explained, and established the true doctrine of justification by faith. We must now refute the false doctrine of the Papists, according to which we are justified by works; or partly by faith, and partly by works. This is the argument which we employ; It is necessary that that righteousness which will stand in the judgment of God must be absolutely perfect, and conformable to the law in every respect. But our best works in this life are imperfect, and defiled with sin. Therefore our best works cannot be the whole, nor even a part of our righteousness before God. The major proposition of this syllogism is proven from the law, which declares: "He that doeth these things shall live in them." "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." (Lev. 18: 5. Deut. 27: 26.) The minor proposition is too plain to need any proof: for we do many things which we ought not to do, and leave many things undone, which we ought to do; yea, we mix much that is evil with the good we do; or in other words the good which we do, is done imperfectly. The complaints and daily prayers of the saints testify to the truth of this. "Forgive us our debts." "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in," &c. (Matt. 5: 92. Ps. 143: 2.) Therefore works which are imperfect cannot constitute perfect righteousness.

This is the first reason why we cannot be justified by our works, because our righteousness would be imperfect in as much as our works are imperfect. We may add many other reasons, such as these. 2. Because if our works were even perfect, yet they are still due from us, and so cannot acquit us, or make amends for past delinquences. "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say we are unprofitable servants," &c. Luke 17: 10.) 3. Our good works are not of us, but of God, who works them in us. 4. They are temporal, and bear no proportion to eternal rewards; whereas there is a necessity that there should be some proportion between merit, and reward. 5. They are the effects of our justification, and so cannot be the cause of it. 6. If we could be justified by our works, we should have whereof to boast, which would be contrary to what the Scripture saith; "Not of works, lest any man, should boast." (Eph. 2: 9.) 7. Conscience would be deprived of true peace, and comfort. 8. Christ would then have died in vain. 9. The way of salvation would not be the same in both testaments, if Abraham had been justified by faith only, and we by works, whether it be by works alone, or by works joined with faith. 10. Christ would not be a perfect Saviour, because a certain part of righteousness, and salvation would then be independent of him.

Question 63. What! do not our good works merit, which yet God will reward in this and a future life?

Answer. This reward is not of merit, but of grace.

EXPOSITION.

This question anticipates an objection on the part of the Papists in favor of justification before God, on account of our works and merits. Reward, say they, presupposes merit, so that where the one is, there the other must be also, for they are correlatives. Everlasting life is proposed as a reward for good works. Therefore the merit of good works is everlasting life. Ans. The first proposition is sometimes true of creatures, because men may deserve something from each other; but it does not always follow even among men, that where there is merit, there is reward. Rewards are often given by men when there is nothing to deserve them. But it is improperly said of God that he bestows eternal life as the reward of our good works: for we cannot deserve any thing at the hands of God by our works. Or the objection may be thus stated: That to which there is a reward attached is meritorious. There is a reward attached to good works. Therefore, according to the order of justice they are meritorious. Ans. That is meritorious to which a reward is attached by obligation; but the reward of good works is according to grace. There are two things to be considered in a reward: obligation and recompense. But here there is no obligation, and hence the reward which follows our good works is a reward which follows of grace. God bestows rewards upon our good works, that he may thereby testify that they are pleasing to him — that he may teach us, that eternal life is promised only to those who strive and agonize, and that he will just as certainly grant us this reward as if we had merited it. All the other arguments by which the Papists endeavor to prove that our good works are meritorious, may properly be referred to this place.

Obj. 2. We are justified by faith. Faith is a work. Therefore we are justified by works. Ans. We deny the consequence which is here drawn, because there is more in the conclusion than in the premises: for this is all that follows legitimately. Therefore we are justified by that work, which we grant, if understood in the sense of an instrument or means, and not as the Papists understand it: for we are justified by faith, as a means, but not for, nor on account of it. There is also in the above syllogism a different form of speech: for in the first proposition faith is understood correlatively, and in the second properly.

Obj. 3. Our righteousness is that by which we are formally made righteous. Faith is our righteousness. Therefore we are formally made righteous by faith. Ans. We deny the consequence which is here drawn, because the term faith, as used in this syllogism must be understood in a different sense in the major and minor propositions, or else it is not true: for properly speaking it is not faith, but the object of faith, or that which faith apprehends and applies to itself, which is the merit of Christ, that constitutes our righteousness. Or, we may reply that there are four terms in this syllogism; because the major speaks of legal, and the minor of evangelical righteousness, or else the major is not true: for evangelical righteousness is not formally in us, as whiteness in a wall; but it is without us in Christ; and becomes ours by the imputation and application of it through faith.

Obj. 4. We are counted righteous in view of that which is imputed unto us for righteousness. Faith is imputed unto us for righteousness. Therefore we are accounted righteous, not only by faith, but also on account

of it. Ans. There is here again a different kind of affirmation in the terms of this syllogism. The major is true of that which is properly and by itself imputed unto us for righteousness, whilst the minor is true of that which is imputed unto us correlatively; because, when it is said through faith, it means through the object of faith, which being apprehended, is properly the formal cause of our righteousness; the efficient cause is God applying unto us the merit of Christ, whilst faith is the instrumental cause. Hence the declaration, *we are justified by faith*, if understood legally as the Papists understand it, is not true, but blasphemy. But if understood evangelically, having respect to the merits of Christ, it is true: for the merit of Christ is the correlative of faith, and is apprehended by it as an instrument.

Obj. 5. Evil works condemn. Therefore good works justify. Ans. But evil works are wholly evil, whilst good works are only imperfectly good, so that these two declarations cannot be opposed to each other in the form in which they are here placed. And even if our works were perfectly good, yet they could not merit eternal life, inasmuch as they are due from us. A reward is due to evil works according to the order of justice; but but not unto good works, because we are bound to do them as the creatures of God; but no one can bind God, on the other hand, by any works or means to confer any benefit upon him. Evil works, again, in their very design oppose and injure God, whilst good works add nothing to his felicity.

Obj. 6. He who does righteously is righteous. (1 John 3: 7.) Therefore we are justified by works. Ans. He that works righteousness is righteous in the sight of men; but in the sight of God no one is righteous by working, but by believing, as the Scripture saith: "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." (Rom. 3: 20.) Again, John does not speak of the manner in which we become righteous, but declares who are righteous; as if he would say, He that is regenerated is also justified, because by doing righteousness he gives evidence that he is justified. There is, therefore, in this objection a fallacy in making that which is not the cause of our justification, the cause of it.

Obj. 7. But Christ said of Mary (Luke 7: 47) her sins which were many were forgiven her, because she loved much. Therefore love is the cause of our justification. Ans. Christ here reasons from the effect to the cause. He concludes that because Mary loved much, and had a deep sense of her indebtedness to God for his mercy, that she must have received the forgiveness of many sins. That this is the meaning of Christ is evident from the parable itself. Again, not every thing that is the cause of a consequence is also the cause of the consequent and thing itself, which would here be the case if it were added: therefore many sins were forgiven her, because she loved much. The particle *because* does not always signify the cause of the thing consequent: for this does not follow; the sun is risen, because it is day. Therefore the day is the cause of the rising of the sun. The contrary is rather true.

Question 64. But doth not this doctrine make men careless and profane?

Answer. By no means; for it is impossible that those who are implanted into Christ by a true faith, should not bring forth fruits of thankfulness.

EXPOSITION.

This Question is designed to meet the slander which the Papists bring against the doctrine of justification by faith, in which they affirm that it is calculated to make men careless and profane. But if such an effect as this does ever follow the preaching of free justification by faith, it can only follow by accident; for the natural effect of this doctrine is to produce an earnest desire of showing our gratitude to God. And further, if this does ever come to pass, it is not because those who are careless and profane apply, but because they do not apply, this doctrine of grace to themselves. To this it is objected: 1. Even those things which are evil by accident are to be abandoned. Therefore this doctrine which makes men worse by accident, must be rejected. Ans. Those things which are evil by accident must indeed be abandoned, unless there be greater and stronger reasons why they should not be omitted, but rather retained and taught, than that they may become evil to men by their own fault. Such reasons now there are in the present case; for the command and glory of God, together with the salvation of the elect, require that this doctrine should be taught, and by no means omitted in our instructions. Obj. 2. There is no need that we should fear that which cannot injure us. But according to the doctrine of justification by faith future sins cannot injure us, for Christ has satisfied for all sins, including those that are future, as well as those that are past. Therefore we need have no fears on account of future sins, which is absurd. Ans. We reply to the major of this syllogism by making the following distinction: that we need not fear that which cannot injure us, whether we have an eye to it or not. But future sins do not injure those who truly repent, but it is different with those who are careless and impenitent. We, therefore, also deny the minor proposition: for God is always offended at sin, which is the greatest offence of which any one can be guilty Our sins likewise deprive us of conformity with God, and bring temporal punishment, even upon the faithful, although they are delivered from such as are eternal. The various other objections which the Papists bring against the doctrine of justification by faith properly belong here. We shall notice the following in addition to the one already refuted:

Obj. 2. That which is not in the Scriptures is not to be taught. But the Scriptures do not teach that we are justified by faith only. Therefore this doctrine is not to be taught Ans That doctrine which is not in the Scriptures, in plain and express terms, nor as to the sense of it, is not to be received. But the Scriptures do most clearly teach that we are justified by faith alone, as touching the sense of this doctrine; for they declare that we are justified freely by grace, without the works of the law, without the law, not of ourselves, not by works of righteousness which we have done, and that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. But to be justified by faith alone is the same thing as to be justified by the blood and merits of Christ apprehended by faith. We would here refer the reader to the reasons which were given in our exposition of the sixty-first Question of the Catechism for retaining the exclusive particle *only*, against the Papists.

Obj. 3. That which is not alone, does not justify by itself. Faith is not alone. Therefore it does not justify alone. Ans. If this be understood as resulting from the premises, that faith does not justify alone,

meaning that it does not exist alone, then the conclusion is proper; for justifying faith is never without its fruits or effects. But if it be understood to mean that faith alone does not accept of the righteousness of Christ, then there is more in the conclusion than in the premises, or else the major is false. I alone may speak in my chamber, and yet I may not be alone. A thing may not be alone, but joined with something else, and yet it alone may have this, or that act; as the will, for instance, is not alone, but joined with the understanding, and yet it alone wills; so the soul of man is not alone, but united with the body, and yet it alone perceives; and so the edge of a razor is not alone but joined with a handle, and yet it alone cuts. This is what is usually, and correctly, called a fallacy of *composition;* for the exclusive particle *only*, which in the minor is connected with the verb *is*, is separated from it in the conclusion, and attached to the word *justify*.

Obj. 4. Faith does not justify without that which is required in those who are justified. Good works are required in those who are justified. Therefore, faith is not without good works, and so does not justify alone. Ans. There is here the same fallacy to which reference has just been made, on account of the doubtful construction of the particle *without*. Faith does not, indeed, justify without those things which are required in those who are justified. But although it never exists alone, and is always joined with love, by which it works, yet it alone justifies—is the act of embracing and applying to itself the merits of Christ. The minor also must be more fully explained; for faith and good works are not required in the same sense in those who are justified. Faith, with its own peculiar act, (without which it cannot be considered) is required as the necessary instrument, by which we apply to ourselves the merits of Christ. Good works, on the other hand, are not required that by them we may apprehend the merits of Christ, much less that we may be justified on account of them; but that we may thereby prove our faith, which without good works is dead, and can only be known by their presence. Good works are required as the fruits of our faith, and as the evidences of our gratitude to God. That is not always necessary for the accomplishment of a certain result, which is necessarily connected with the cause of the same thing. So good works, although they are necessarily connected with faith, are nevertheless not necessary for the apprehension of the merits of Christ.

Obj. 5. Where there are a number of things required, there we cannot use any exclusive particles. But good works are required in addition to faith in them that are justified. Therefore, we cannot say by faith only. Ans. The same answer may be returned to this objection which we have given to the one just noticed. Many things are required, but not in the same sense. Faith is necessary as the means by which we apprehend the righteousness of Christ, whilst good works are necessary as the evidences of our faith and gratitude.

Obj. 6. Those who are justified by two things, are not justified by one only. We are justified by two things, by faith, and the merits of Christ. Therefore we are not justified by faith only. Ans. The same answer may again be returned to this objection; for we are justified by faith, and the merits of Christ in a different sense. We are justified by faith as that which apprehends the righteousness of Christ; whilst the merits of Christ are the formal cause of our righteousness.

Obj. 7. Knowledge does not justify. Faith is knowledge. Therefore faith does not justify. Ans. But justifying faith does not merely include a certain knowledge, but also an assured confidence, by which, as a means, we apply to ourselves the merits of Christ. Knowledge and confidence also differ widely. The former is in the understanding, the latter in the will. Confidence, therefore, does not only include a knowledge of a certain thing, but also a will, and purpose to do, or to apply that which we know, and to trust in it in such a manner as to find safety in it, and to rejoice concerning it. To have confidence is to possess what is called in German Vertrauen. To believe in God in this manner is not only to know him, but also to have confidence in him. The devil has a knowledge of God, and of the divine promises, but has no confidence in him. His knowledge is, therefore, no justifying faith, being only historical, of which the apostle James speaks, when he says, "The devils believe and tremble." (James 2 : 19.) Of such a faith we readily grant the argument of the Papists, but not of a justifying faith.

Obj. 8. James says, (2 : 24) "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." Therefore faith only does not justify. Ans. There is here a double ambiguity. In the first place, the apostle James does not speak of that righteousness by which we are justified before God, or on account of which God regards us as just; but of that righteousness by which we are justified before men by our works. That this is so, is clear from the following considerations. In verse 18, he says, "Shew me thy faith without thy works." Shew me, he says, who am a man. He, therefore, speaks of the manifestation of faith and righteousness in the sight of men. In verse 21, he says, "Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works, when he had offered his son upon the altar." This cannot be understood of justification in the sight of God; for Abraham was accounted righteous in this sense long before he offered his son. Paul also says, that Abraham was justified before God, not of works, but of faith. James, therefore, in the chapter to which reference is had, means that Abraham was justified before God by faith, because it is written, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness;" (Rom. 4 : 3) but he gave evidence to men of his righteousness, by his good works, and obedience to God. This is the first ambiguity in the word *justify*. The other is in the word *faith;* for when this apostle denies that we are justified by faith, he does not speak of a true, and living faith as Paul does, but of a dead faith, which consists in mere knowledge, without confidence and works. This is evident from what he says, in verse 17 : "Even so faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone;" and attributes such a faith to the devils who certainly have no true justifying faith. Finally, in verse 26, he compares that faith which he says does not justify to a dead body; but such is no true, or justifying faith. In a word, if the term justify, as used by the apostle James, is understood properly, of justification before God, then the term faith signifies a dead faith; and if we understand the faith here spoken of as true, or justifying faith, then the ambiguity in it is the word justify.

Obj. 9. It is not necessary to do that which is not required for our justification. But it is necessary to perform good works. Therefore they are required for our justification. Ans. We deny the major, because the same thing may have many ends. Good works, although they are not required for

our justification, are nevertheless necessary to show our gatitude, and the glory of God, as it is said: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5: 16.) This is one reason why good works should be performed. Other reasons will be assigned when we come to treat the subject of gratitude.

Obj. 10. The work of Phinehas (Ps. 106: 30, 31) is said to have been counted unto him for righteousness. Therefore we are justified by works. Ans. This, however, is a wrong interpretation of the passage alluded to; for the sense is, that God approved of his work; but not that he was justified on account of it: for by the works of the law, no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God.

Obj. 11. Ten crowns are a part of a hundred crowns in the payment of a debt. Therefore, good works are also a certain part of our righteousness before God. Ans. The examples are not the same; for ten crowns, in the first place, are a whole part of a hundred crowns, and being multiplied ten times make the whole amount of the debt. But our works are not a perfect, but an imperfect part of the obedience due from us, and however frequently they may be multiplied, they, nevertheless, never constitute perfect obedience. Again, ten crowns may be received by a certain creditor as a part of a debt, because there may be some hope that the balance may be paid. God, however, cannot receive our good works as a part of our righteousness, because there is no hope of perfect satisfaction being made by us, whilst the law condemns the slightest imperfection.

Obj. 12. The righteousness which Christ accomplished is according to the prophet Daniel (9: 24) an everlasting righteousness. That righteousness which is imputed unto us is not everlasting. Therefore it is not the righteousness of Christ which is imputed unto us. Ans. We deny the minor of this syllogism, because the righteousness which is imputed unto us is everlasting, both by the perpetual continuation of imputation in this life, and by the perfection of that righteousness which is begun in us, each of which is the righteousness of the Messiah, and will be everlasting: for God will forever delight in us on account of Christ his Son. Imputation will, therefore, also be continued, or it will rather be changed into our own righteousness. But some one will perhaps reply, where there is no sin, there cannot be any remission, or imputation. But there will be no sin in the life to come. Therefore there will be no remission or imputation. We grant the whole argument if it is properly understood. There will be no remission of sin in the life to come, that is, there will be no remission of present sin; yet there will be of past sins, because the remission which is here granted will continue and last forever; or, what is the same thing, the sins which are here in this life forgiven, will never be imputed unto us in the life to come: yea, even that conformity which we shall have with God, in the life to come, will be the effect of the righteousness here imputed unto us.

Obj. 13. The Lord is our righteousness. (Jer. 23: 6.) Therefore we are justified, not by imputed righteousness, but God himself dwelling essentially in us, is our righteousness. Ans. In this declaration of the prophet, the effect, by a figure of speech, is put for the cause, the abstract for the concrete. *The Lord is our righteousness*, which means that he is our justifier, as Christ is said "to be made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" (1 Cor. 1: 30.) which means

that he is a teacher of wisdom, a justifier, a sanctifier, and redeemer. The righteousness with which God justifies us is not in us, nor is it God himself dwelling in us, for he would then be an accident to the creature. Osiander, the author of this and the preceding objection, does not distinguish the cause from the effect, or the righteousness which is uncreated from that which is created. As we do not live, and are not wise by the essence of God, (for this would in effect be to say that we are as wise as God,) so we are not righteous by his essence. There is nothing more impious, therefore, than to say that the essential righteousness of the Creator is the righteousness of the creature, from which it would follow that we have the righteousness of God; yea, the very essence of God.

TWENTY-FIFTH LORD'S DAY.

OF THE SACRAMENTS.

Question. 65. Since then we are made partakers of Christ, and all his benefits, by faith only, whence doth this faith proceed?

Answer. From the Holy Ghost, who works faith in our hearts by the preaching of the gospel, and confirms it by the use of the sacraments.

EXPOSITION.

This Question points out the connection which holds between the doctrine of faith and the sacraments. The Holy Ghost ordinarily produces faith (concerning which we have spoken) in us by the ecclesiastical ministry, which consists of two parts, *the word and the sacraments.* The Holy Ghost works faith in our hearts by the preaching of the gospel; and cherishes, confirms, and seals it by the use of the sacraments. The word is a charter to which the sacraments are attached as signs. The charter is the gospel itself, to which the sacraments are affixed as the seals of the divine will. Whatever the word promises concerning our salvation through Christ, that the sacraments, as signs, and seals annexed thereto, confirm unto us more and more for the purpose of helping our infirmity. It is proper, therefore, that we should now speak of the sacraments, the seals of faith, appended to the gospel.

Obj. But it is said that the Holy Ghost and the word produce faith in us, and that the sacraments strengthen it. In what, therefore, do these three differ from each other? Ans. They differ very much. 1. The Holy Ghost works and confirms faith in us as the efficient cause, whilst the word and sacraments do this as instrumental causes. 2. The Holy Ghost can also work faith in us independent of the word and the sacraments, whilst these, on the other hand, can effect nothing independent of the Holy Ghost. 3. The Holy Ghost works effectually in whomsoever he dwells, which cannot be said of the word and sacraments.

Question 67. What are the sacraments?

Answer. The sacraments are holy visible signs and seals, appointed of God for this end, that by the use thereof he may the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the gospel, viz: that he grants us freely the remission of sin, and life eternal, for the sake of that one sacrifice of Christ, accomplished on the cross.

EXPOSITION.

In explaining the doctrine of the Sacraments, we shall speak first of the sacraments in general, and afterwards of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, in particular. The following questions claim our attention in speaking of the sacraments in general:

I. *What are the sacraments?*
II. *What are the ends thereof?*
III. *In what do the sacraments differ from sacrifices?*
IV. *What have the sacraments in common with the word, and in what do they differ from it?*
V. *In what do the sacraments of the Old and New Testament differ?*
VI. *What are the signs, and what the things signified in the sacraments, and in what do they differ?*
VII. *What is the sacramental union?*
VIII. *What are sacramental forms of speech?*
IX. *What is the proper use of the sacraments?*
X. *What do the ungodly receive in the use of the sacraments?*
XI. *How many sacraments belong to the New Testament?*

I. What are the Sacraments?

In answering this question we must consider what is meant by the term sacrament, and what by the thing signified. The word *sacramentum* signified among the ancient Romans a certain sum of money deposited, by those who were at law with each other, in some sacred place, or in the hands of the high priest, upon this condition that he who gained the suit, should have his part refunded, whilst the part of the one who was defeated, went to the public treasury. This signification of the word is irrelevant. The word also signified among the Romans the solemn oath taken in war, which was also termed a military oath, so called from the fact, that those who took it were consecrated, and pledged to their commander to serve him and none else. From this some conclude that the ceremonies to which reference is here had are called sacraments, because as soldiers bound themselves to their commander by the military oath, (sacramentum) so we, by the use of the sacraments, or by a solemn oath, bind ourselves to Christ, our Captain, in the presence of God, angels and men. This is, indeed, beautiful and significant; but it is more probable that the word sacrament came into use from the old Latin translation in which wherever the word *mystery* occurs in the Greek text, it is rendered in the Latin *sacramentum*. The word mystery comes from the Greek μυέω, which means to instruct, or to imitate one in holy things; whence also the German Weihen. Μυέω is again derived from μύω, which means to shut, or close the mouth or lips; because as Eustathius says, "*it behooved those*

who were initiated into the rites to shut their mouth, and not utter those things which were secret." By a mystery we usually understand something unknown, or the sign of something unknown, or that which has a secret signification which only those who are initiated understand. By a *sign* we mean something visible and material, or a divinely instituted ceremony, which denotes something invisible and spiritual, which the Greeks called a *mystery*, and the Latin Theologians a *sacrament*, by which was meant a sign having a secret signification which none understand except such as are instructed, and initiated in the chief points of the christian religion. Such signs as these God designs should always exist in the church, that thus he may show his good will to men, and they, on the other hand, declare their faith and obedience to him.

The term sacrament is, however, variously used by theological writers. Sometimes it is taken properly for some eternal rite and ceremony; then it is taken for the symbols themselves; then for the thing signified by these symbols; and lastly for both the symbols, and the thing specified. So much in regard to the word sacrament. We must now proceed to the definition of the thing.

Sacraments are rites, or ceremonies instituted by God to the end, that they may be signs of the covenant, or of God's good will towards us, and of the obligation of the church to repentance and faith; and that they may be marks by which the true church may be known and distinguished from all other religions. In the language of the Catechism, "*sacraments are holy visible signs, and seals appointed of God for this end, that by the use thereof he may the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the gospel*," &c. This definition consists of three parts: the first of which has respect to the kind of sacraments, whilst the other two refer to their differences. Of the first part it is said, that they *are holy visible signs and seals*, which means that they are divine, and signify holy things, such as pertain to the worship of God, and the salvation of men. A *sign*, according to the definition of Augustin, is that which signifies something different from that which is presented to the senses, thus causing something else to arise in the thoughts, or mind; or, it may be defined as that by which the understanding perceives something different from that which strikes the senses. It is in this sense that words are signs of things. *A sign and seal differ* from each other, as genus and species. Every seal is a sign, but not every sign is a seal. A seal certifies and confirms, whilst a sign only shows, or declares something. There are two kinds of signs. Some merely signify, whilst others also confirms as is true of those, from which we do not only understand what they signify, but also argue and reason concerning the thing which they declare, so that we are not left in doubt, whether it be true or false; or in other words, we are confirmed in regard to the certain exhibition and perception of the thing signified. Both of these are included in the above definition, inasmuch as the sacraments do not only signify, but also seal what is promised in the gospel. They are not only figurative signs, or remembrancers and shadows, as the ancients called them, but they are also assurances, and evidences: they are signs which exhibit, and seal in their true use, inasmuch as they exhibit the things promised in the gospel to those that believe, and also seal the exhibiting or setting forth of these things. God says of circumcision, "It shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you." (Gen. 17: 11.) And Paul says, "He

received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had." (Rom. 4: 11.) Sacraments, therefore, accomplish the same thing which pledges do; for they both signify that something is promised us, and at the same time confirm us in regard to the same thing. It is for this reason that the term seal is added in the definition.

These signs and seals are called *holy*, because they have been given unto us of God, and that for a holy purpose: for things are holy in two respects, either as they are done by God in respect to us, or by us in respect to him. They are called *visible signs*, (and such they ought to be) because the things which they signify are invisible. If they are to support, and strengthen our faith, there is a necessity that they should be perceived by the outward sense, so that the inward sense may be moved thereby; for that is no sign to any one which he cannot see. To make a sign invisible would imply a contradiction, and would make that a sign, which is none. The things which are signified are invisible, but not the signs; otherwise signs could not be said to signify things, much less to confirm them, because in that case that which is uncertain would be confirmed by that which is equally uncertain. Hence it is, that the Fathers define a sacrament, *to be a visible sign of an invisible grace.*

As it respects the things in which the sacraments differ from other holy things, the definition which the Catechism gives, specifies these two particulars: 1. They are appointed, or instituted of God. 2. They are instituted for this end, that by the use thereof, God may the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the gospel. The first difference is *general*, which the sacraments have in common with other signs given by God, whether they be universal, as the rainbow, or particular, as Gideon's fleece, first wet with the dew, and then dry; and as the touching of the tongue of Isaiah with a burning coal. The second difference is *particular*, arising from the chief end of the sacraments which properly distinguishes them from all other holy signs.

That these signs were instituted by God alone is clear beyond doubt: for as he alone reveals his own will, instructs us in it, and gives us the promise of grace, so he alone confirms this promise unto us through the sacraments. Hence none but God has the right, and authority to institute sacraments; for to do this implies these two things: the giving a certain rite and ceremony to the church, and adding to it the promise of grace, by which God declares that he will grant the thing signified to those who properly use the sign. But these things belong to God alone. For as the act of receiving into favor, and of the forgiveness of sins belongs to God, so it is also in relation to the promise of grace. And as God alone institutes public worship, so he alone is able to confirm unto us, through the ministry of the word, and the sacraments, the promise of grace, which has reference to the reception of all those benefits which are necessary to salvation, and which the ceremonies of the sacraments signify, and confirm.

The promise of the gospel is called the promise of grace; because it is chiefly in the gospel that God declares it unto us. The Catechism, in the definition which it gives of the sacraments, refers to this promise that this difference may be the better understood; because God has promised to men other things also, and confirmed them with signs. For the sacraments are signs, not of any promise whatever, but of the promise of grace, which has

respect, not to one particular individual, as the touching of the lips of the prophet, but to the whole church.

This promise given in the gospel is, furthermore, *declared more fully* through the sacraments. This is done by the analogy which holds between the signs, and the things which they signify, which analogy it is necessary for us to understand if we would have a proper idea of the sacraments, just as a true similitude cannot be understood, unless the points of resemblance be also perceived.

But God does not only declare to us the promise of the gospel through the sacraments; *he also seals it* unto us: 1. Because he is equally true when he speaks to us, whether it be through the word, or through certain signs. He, therefore, also makes us acquainted with his will, both by his word, and sacraments; but yet more especially by the latter. 2. Because the sacraments are seals, and pledges added to the promise, that they may testify to those who observe them in faith, that they shall be made the partaker of those good things which are promised.

II. What are the ends of the Sacraments?

1. The principal end of the sacraments is embodied in the definition which we have given, in which it is said, *that they are signs of the covenant, and of God's good will towards us.* God testifies through them that he confers the things promised in the right use of the sacraments. Or it may be said that God teaches us concerning his will through the sacraments, exhorts us to embrace the benefits which Christ has purchased in our behalf, and by the same sacraments seals to us these benefits of Christ. That the sacraments *seal* these blessings to us, may be inferred from the fact that they are signs to which a promise is annexed. It is for this reason, that the Holy Ghost effectually influences our hearts by these signs and pledges of the divine favor, no less than by the word.

2. Another end of the sacraments is the profession, and acknowledgement of our gratitude and duty to God, or to bind us to maintain our faith, and a good conscience. In the use of the sacraments we bind ourselves to God, that we will be his people, as he is our God; that we will believe in him, receive the benefits which he offers unto us, and exercise true repentance.

3. The sacraments serve as marks by which the true church is distinguished from all the various sects. God designs that his church should be visible in the world, and known by these holy signs, as soldiers are known by their military badges, and sheep by the marks which the shepherd places upon them. The Jews he commanded to be circumcised, whilst strangers were excluded from the church, and were prohibited from eating the Passover. Christ now commands christians to be baptized, and to observe the Lord's supper, that his kingdom may thus be distinguished from the synagogue of Satan, which distinction he will have made for his own glory, and for our comfort and salvation. For as he will not himself be joined with idols, so he will not suffer his people to be associated with the kingdom of the devil.

4. The sacraments contribute to the preservation and propagation of the doctrine of the gospel, in as much as God always accompanies the use of the sacraments with the word and its application. "It shall be when thy

son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage," &c. (Ex. 13. 14.)

5. The sacraments are bonds of mutual love. Those who have entered into a league with Christ, the Head of the church, ought not to be at variance with each other. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." The sacraments are in like manner cords that bind together the public assemblies which come together in the church. "When ye come together to eat, tarry one for another." "For we being many are one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread." "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism," &c. 1. Cor. 12: 13; 11: 33; 10: 17. Ep. 4: 3. 4. 5.) We cannot, however, establish this communion among ourselves, nor preserve it when once established, nor profitably shew the Lord's death, as long as we contend with each other with bitter feelings in regard to the institution of the sacraments; for they are pledges of that communion which christians have with Christ in the first place, and then with each other.

III. In what do the Sacraments differ from sacrifices?

The distinction which exists between the sacraments and sacrifices should be observed in order that we may know what to do when we observe the sacraments, so as not to make sacrifices out of them, as the Papists do, who present their own works, and imagine that they please God, and deserve the remission of sins in view of what they have done. The difference in question consists chiefly in two things. 1. *In the nature* of the things spoken of. Sacraments are nothing more than ceremonies testifying to us the will of God, whilst sacrifices may be ceremonies, and moral works also; as our sacrifices of thanksgiving, praise, gratitude, alms, &c., are moral works, by which we render unto God, without any ceremony, the obedience and honor due him. 2. *They differ in their end.* In the sacraments, God offers to us his benefits; sacrifices, on the other hand, are evidences of our obedience to God. This difference will be manifest by giving a definition of both. A sacrament is that wherein God gives us certain signs with the things which they signify; or it is that wherein God declares that he offers, and bestows his benefits upon us; whilst a sacrifice is that in which we render unto God the obedience and worship which he requires at our hands; or it is a work which we perform in faith, and with this specific object, that God may have the honor, and obedience which belong to him. They differ, therefore, in the same way in which giving and receiving differ. God gives sacraments unto us, and receives sacrifices from us. Yet it may be proper to remark, that the same rite may be both a sacrament and a sacrifice in different respects. It may be a sacrament as it is given of God, and a sacrifice as it is used by the godly, who in this way manifest their obedience and gratitude to God. Hence sacraments and sacrifices are often the same, but always in a different respect. In relation to us, all the sacraments are also sacrifices of thanksgiving, but not such as are propitiatory, for there is only one propitiatory sacrifice which is the one Christ offered for us upon the cross.

In view of what has now been said we may easily return an answer to the following objection: The Passover, and other ceremonies of the Old Testament, were sacrifices and sacraments. Therefore sacraments do not differ from sacrifices. Ans. There is more in the conclusion than in the premises. All that follows legitimately, is that the same thing may be both a sacrament, and a sacrifice, which we admit. So Baptism and the Lord's Supper are sacraments and sacrifices in a different respect. They are sacraments, and that chiefly, because they are the work of God, who gives us something in them, and declares to us that which is given. For just as God speaks to us through his ministers, as with his own mouth, so he also gives the sacraments unto us by the hands of his ministers, and we again receive them from their hands, as from the hands of God. And he does not merely give us the outward sign, but he gives us much more. Yea, even reaches unto us, as it were, with his hand the things signified by the sacraments in their proper use, if we only observe them with reverence and faith. But Baptism and the Lord's Supper are sacrifices only in as far as they relate to what we perform to God, or in as far as we receive these symbols, as it were from the hand of God, and so declare our obedience to him.

IV. What have the Sacraments in common with the Word, and in what do they differ from it?

This question will be answered in the exposition of the sixty-seventh Question of the Catechism, to which we refer the reader.

V. In what do the Sacraments of the Old and New Testaments agree, and differ?

They agree in having God for their author, and in the things which are signified; for the sacraments, both of the Old and New Testaments, signify, promise and offer the same blessings, viz: the forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost through Christ alone, as the following passages of Scripture prove: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." "Our fathers were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ." "In whom ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands," by which it is declared that we receive the same blessings in baptism which the saints of old did in circumcision. "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us." (Heb. 13: 8. 1 Cor. 10: 2, 3, 4. Col. 2: 11. 1 Cor. 5: 7.) Augustin says, "*The sacraments of the Old and New Testaments differ in their signs, but agree in the thing signified. The fathers all ate the same spiritual meat. The earthly meat, however, which they ate was different from that which we eat; they ate manna, we do not; but the spiritual meat which they did eat, is the same as that which we eat.*" Without Christ, who is the thing signified in the sacraments, of both testaments, no one ever has been saved, or can be saved. It follows, therefore, that the fathers, who lived under the Old Testament, had the same communion with Christ which we also have, and that this was signified no less to them, by the word and sacraments, than it is now to us

under the New Covenant. Hence it is not only idolatry to seek in the sacraments another communion with Christ, than that which is in his word; but the same thing may also be said to be true, when we seek another communion in the sacraments of the New Testament, from that which was in the sacraments of the Old.

The sacraments of the Old and New Testaments differ: 1. *In rites and ceremonies.* There were rites in connection with the sacraments of the Old Testament, which do not belong to those of the New. When Christ came there was a change made in the outward rites to indicate the commencement of the new dispensation. 2. They differ *in number.* Formerly there were many and painful rites; now they are less, in number, and more simple. 3. They differ in *their signification.* The Old signified Christ who was to come; the New shew his death as having already taken place. 4. They differ *in duration.* The Old were to continue merely to the coming of the Messiah; the New will continue to the end of the world. 5. The sacraments of the Old Testament were binding merely upon the Jews; for those who were converted from other nations were not required to be circumcised; the sacraments of the New Testament are binding upon the whole church, of whatever nation they may belong. "Baptize all nations." "Drink ye all of it." (Matt. 28: 19; 26: 27.) 6. They differ *in clearness.* Those of the Old Testament were more obscure inasmuch as they shadowed forth things that were to come: those of the New are better understood, because they declare things which have already come to pass, and which have been fulfilled in Christ.

VI. What are the signs, and what the things signified in the Sacraments, and in what do they differ?

In every sacrament there are two things; the sign and the thing signified. *The sign* includes the element which is used, together with the whole external transaction. *The thing signified* is Christ, with all his benefits; or, it is the communion, and participation of Christ, and his benefits.

The signs differ, therefore, from the things signified. 1. *In substance.* The signs are material, visible and earthly; the things signified are spiritual, invisible and heavenly. Obj. But the body and blood of Christ consist of that which is material and earthly. Ans. The things signified are here called spiritual, not as it respects their substance; but as it respects the manner in which they are received, because they are received through the working of the Holy Ghost, by faith alone, and not by any of the members of our body. The term *spiritual* sometimes signifies in the Scriptures an immaterial nature or Spirit; at other times it signifies an effect, or gift of the Holy Spirit; and then again it signifies an object of the Spirit, or of spiritual influences, which is received by the influence of the Holy Spirit, or which is given to those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, as it is said, "They did all eat the same spiritual meat." And it is in this sense that the body and blood of Christ are called in the sacraments spiritual things. 2. *They differ in the mode in which they are received.* The signs are received visibly with the hand, mouth and members of the body, and, therefore, by unbelievers also. The things signified are received only by faith, and the Spirit, and, therefore, by none but believers. 3. They differ *in their end or use.* The things are given for the purpose of obtaining

eternal life; because they are eternal life itself, or a part of it, or they at least lead to its attainment. The signs are received for the purpose of sealing and confirming our faith in the things which are promised. 4. The things signified are absolutely necessary for all that will be saved; the signs are not absolutely necessary for all, but for such only as are capable of using them; for it is not the want, but the contempt of the sacraments which condemns. 5. Lastly, the signs are different in different sacraments; but the things are always the same in all the sacraments.

VII. What is the union between the signs and the things signified, which we call Sacramental?

Union, in general, is the joining together of two or more things, so that in some way or other they become one. The hypostatical union consists in joining together the divine and human natures of Christ, so as to constitute but one person. The union which holds between the sign and the thing signified in the sacraments is called a *sacramental union;* and it is of this that we must now speak. The Papists imagine that the signs which are used in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, are changed into the things signified. But a change is no union. It is necessary, also, that a sacramental union should correspond with all sacraments, or else it will not be sacramental, but will have reference merely to baptism, and the eucharist, and so be no longer general in its nature. Others suppose that there is a corporal conjunction, or union between the sign and the thing signified, as if they were one mass, and as if both existed at the same time in the same place. But such a co-existence as this, and concealment of the one in the other is no sacramental union, for the reason that it does not agree with sacraments generally. A sacramental union, therefore, is not corporal, nor does it consist in the presence of the sign and the thing signified in the same place; much less in tran, or con-substantiation; but it is relative, and consists in these two things: 1. In a likeness or correspondence between the signs and the things signified thereby, concerning which Augustin says: "*If the sacraments had not a certain resemblance or relation to the things of which they are sacraments, they would not be sacraments.*" 2. In the joint-exhibition and reception of the signs and things signified in their proper use, which cannot be done without faith, as we shall hereafter show. None but those who have faith receive from the minister the signs, and from Christ the things signified; and when they thus receive both in their proper use, we have what is called the sacramental union.

This is proven, *first*, from the nature of a sacrament. The word sacrament is relative. The rites and ceremonies which God has instituted constitute the foundation or ground-work. The term includes Christ, and communion with him in all his benefits. The relation, is the order or connection which exists between the rites and the things which they signify. The correlatives are the signs and the things signified. From this, it is evident that the sacramental union is nothing else, than the relation which the sign has to that which is signified, from which we obtain this infallible rule: *While this relation continues the sign and the thing signified remain united; but when it once ceases, they are no longer united;* by which we are to understand, that as long as the order established by God between the sign and the thing signified remains, so long are the things exhibited

and sealed with the signs; but when this divine appointment ceases, the signs do not exhibit or seal anything unto us. The *second* proof which we advance in support of the sacramental union as just explained, is that which arises out of the analogy and correspondence of sacraments. It must be a union in harmony with all sacraments. Let us, therefore, inquire, what was the union between Christ and the sacraments of old, and we shall then see what is the nature of the union which holds in the sacraments of the New Testament; for there must be a correspondence in this respect, or else the sacraments of old were no sacraments, or the union was not sacramental, not being such as corresponds with all sacraments. The union now which belonged to the sacraments of old could only be a respective or relative union. Hence, such must now also be the nature of that union which is sacramental.

VIII. What are the forms of speech which the Scriptures and the Church use in relation to the Sacraments?

The forms of speech used in regard to the sacraments are in part proper, and in part figurative. They are *proper* when the sacraments are called tokens, signs, seals, pledges, and when such other expressions are used as those which seal and confirm unto us the certainty of those things which God has promised. Thus "circumcision is a seal of the righteousness of faith." "And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your fore-skin, and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you." (Rom. 4: 11. Gen. 17: 11.) So the bread is a sign of the body of Christ. The form of speech is also proper when the promise is expressly joined to the signs — as when it is said that those who receive the signs shall also receive the things signified thereby, as "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 15.)

The form of speech is figurative or sacramental, 1. When the names of the things signified are attributed to the signs, as when it is said, "Our Passover is sacrificed;" "That rock was Christ;" "The bread is the body of Christ." (1 Cor. 5: 7; 10: 5. &c.) 2. When the names of the signs are attributed to the things signified, as when it is said "Christ is our Passover." 3. When the properties which belong to the things are attributed to the signs, as "The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10: 16.) So baptism is said to wash away sins, to save and regenerate. 4. When the properties which belong to the signs are attributed to the things themselves, as, "This is my body which is broken for you." So we are said to be washed with the blood of Christ, to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, to be nourished by the body and blood of Christ, &c. All these forms of speech signify the same thing, which is that the signs represent, and seal the things; and that both the signs and the things are received at the same time by the faithful in the proper use of the sacraments.

Briefly, a sacramental form of speech is that in which the name, or property of the sign is attributed to the thing signified; or in which the name or property of the thing signified is attributed to the sign, and the sense which it conveys is, not that the one is changed into the other, but that the sign represents, and seals that which is signified.

The reason on account of which this form of speech is employed arises

from the analogy which there is between the sign, and the thing signified, of which Augustin speaks in the following language: "*If the sacraments had not a certain correspondence with the things of which they are sacraments they would not be sacraments. And it is mostly on account of this correspondence that they receive the names of the things themselves. As, therefore, the sacrament of the body of Christ, is after a certain manner the body of Christ, and as the sacrament of the blood of Christ, is his blood, so the sacrament of faith, is faith.*" Again, "*The things which signify usually receive the name of that which is signified. Hence it is said, "That Rock was Christ." The apostle does not say, that rock signified Christ; but he speaks of it as if it were that which it was not in reality, but only in signification.*"

IX. What is the lawful use of the Sacraments?

The sacraments are used lawfully, when the faithful, or such as are converted observe the rites which God has instituted, as signs of grace, and pledges of his will to them. It may be said to consist in these three things: 1. In observing in their purity the rites which God has instituted. Those things which Anti-Christ has added must be removed, and those which have been thrown aside must be restored. This institution of Christ must be retained in its purity. 2. When those observe these rites, for whom God instituted them. None but christians, who by profession of faith, and repentance are members of the church ought to observe the sacraments. "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest be baptized." "And were baptized confessing their sins." (Acts 8: 37. Math. 3: 6.) 3. When the sacraments are observed with the design for which they were instituted. If any of these conditions are wanting, or if any of the rites are changed, and another design substituted without divine authority; or if the signs be received without faith, it is manifest that the sign and the thing signified do not continue united according to divine appointment. Of those who receive the sacraments it is said: "Circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law," &c. (Rom. 2: 25.) When abuses are connected with the observance of the sacraments the Apostle says: "This is not to eat the Lord's supper." (1 Cor. 11. 20.) And so when the sacraments are observed with an improper design, no benefit is received; for, says the prophet Hosea 5: 6. "They shall go with their flocks, and with their herds to seek the Lord, but they shall not find him." God did not institute sacrifices that justification and salvation might be obtained thereby. Nor is any one allowed to change the ordinances of God to any other end, than that to which he himself has appointed them. To do this is to disobey God, and to forfeit his promise. The sacraments, therefore, without their appointed and lawful use are no sacraments, being nothing more than vain ceremonies, and empty forms. Their proper use consists in true faith and repentance. Hence the sacraments are no sacraments to those who are destitute of these conditions, so that those persons are beside themselves who, affirm that unbelievers and infidels receive in connection with the signs the things which are signified thereby.

What do the ungodly receive in the use of the Sacraments?

In discussing the subject of the sacraments we must especially consider *what*, *to whom*, and *how* God offers and communicates in them. As it respects the wicked, although God also offers them his benefits in the sacraments, yet they receive nothing more than the naked signs, and these to their own judgment, and condemnation, in as much as they are destitute of faith. This is proven: 1. Because the benefits of Christ are received only in the proper use of the sacraments. But the wicked do not use them properly, for they receive them unworthily, having no faith, or repentance. Hence the apostle Paul says: "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." (1 Cor. 11: 27.) The ungodly now eat and drink unworthily, because they profane the sacraments. 2. To whom there is nothing promised in the word, to him the sacraments seal nothing. But the word promises nothing to the wicked; for all the promises of the gospel are made upon the condition of repentance, and faith. The sacraments, therefore, neither seal, nor confer any thing upon the ungodly. As a charter promises certain things to certain persons, and as the sign which is appended thereto promises the same things to the same individuals, and to none else; so God also bestows his benefits in the same manner, and to the same persons to whom he promises them. But God has promised nothing to the ungodly as long as they continue in their unbelief. 3. We receive spiritual things by faith. But the ungodly have no faith. Therefore they do not receive any spiritual things. 4. To be ungodly and yet receive the thing signified in the sacraments implies a contradiction.

XI. How many Sacraments belong to the New Testament?

This question is answered in the 68th Question of the Catechism, to which the reader is referred.

Question 67. Are both word and sacraments then ordained and appointed for this end, that they may direct our faith to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, on the cross, as the only ground for our salvation?

Answer. Yes, indeed; for the Holy Ghost teaches us, in the gospel, and assures us by the sacraments, that the whole of our salvation depends upon that one sacrifice of Christ, which he offered for us on the cross.

EXPOSITION.

The sacraments have certain things in common with the word, and certain things, again which are different from the word. They agree in the following particulars:

1. Both have God for their author.

2. God administers, and dispenses both by the ministers of the church. He speaks unto us in his word by his ministers, and by them dispenses the signs which are used in the administration of the sacraments. The things, however, which the signs signify, the Son of God bestows upon us immediately; for he said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." "The bread that I

will give is my flesh." John the Baptist says of him: "I indeed baptize you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." (John 20: 22; 6: 51. Matt. 3: 11.)

3. Both are means through which the Holy Ghost kindles and strengthens faith in us: and so both also confirm and strengthen faith.

4. They have this especially in common, that both exhibit the same things to us. God declares his will in both; he offers the same blessings, the same grace, and the same Christ in both; nor does he exhibit, or confirm any thing by the sacraments, different from what he promises in his word. Whoever, therefore, seeks any thing in the sacraments, which God has not promised in his word, idolizes the sacraments.

The sacraments differ from the word, 1. According to their *nature*. Words signify and express certain things according to the appointment of men, who use them arbitrarily. The sacraments signify certain things according to the analogy which exists between the signs and the things which are signified. We also read, and hear words, whilst we receive signs by feeling, seeing and tasting. Again, words only signify certain things: signs and symbols also confirm.

2. They differ in *their objects*. The word with its various commands and promises is preached to all men without any distinction, to the unregenerate as well as to those who are regenerated and members of the church. It is preached to the former that they may be regenerated, and exercise faith in Christ, or be rendered perfectly inexcusable; and to the latter that their faith may be more, and more confirmed. The sacraments, on the other hand, are dispensed only to those who are members of the church, who profess repentance and faith, and are designed to preserve and strengthen their faith. Again, the word is preached to all, and every one at the same time; the sacraments are administered to one at a time. One is baptized after another: and the Lord's supper is given to one after another.

3. The word is that through which the Holy Ghost commences and confirms faith in us, and for this reason, should go before the sacraments. The sacraments are means through which the Holy Ghost confirms faith already called into exercise, and for this reason ought to follow the word. The reason of this difference is that the sacraments do not exert any influence unless they be understood. There is no desire for that which is unknown. There must, therefore, necessarily be some explanation of the sacraments out of the word before they are observed. The case is different, however, in regard to the infants of the church: for in them the Holy Spirit neither begins, nor confirms faith by means of the word; but by an inward working; and that because they are also included in the covenant and promise of God, being born in the Church.

4. The word is preached only to adults: some of the sacraments include infants also, among their subjects, as circumcision, and baptism.

5. The word is sufficient and necessary for the salvation of adults; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10: 17.) The sacraments, however, are not positively and absolutely necessary for all, neither are they in themselves sufficient for salvation independent of the word. Seals without a charter, or without being affixed to something are of no consequence; and that familiar saying of Augustin is true beyond doubt: "*It is not the want, but the contempt of the sacraments that condemns.*"

6. The word may be without the sacraments, as it respects both its public and private exposition, and it may be effectual also independent of the sacraments, as in the case of Cornelius: the sacraments, on the other hand, cannot be without the word, nor can they have any efficacy independent of it.

7. The word is that which is confirmed by the signs which are used: the sacraments are the things by which the word is confirmed.

Lastly, Augustin expresses that in which the word and sacraments agree and differ most briefly, when he defines "*a sacrament a visible word*;" for when he defines a sacrament a *word*, he expresses that in which they agree, which is, that they both teach the same thing. And by adding the word *visible*, he expresses the difference, which consists in rites, and ceremonies. In a word, the signs declare unto us the will of God by administration; whilst the word declares it through the medium of speech. Faith is called into exercise, and confirmed by the word; the sacraments do nothing more than confirm faith. The word is also effectual apart from the sacraments; whilst the sacraments effect nothing independent of the word. Adults cannot be saved without knowledge; they may, however, be regenerated and saved without the sacraments, if they do not despise them. The word extends to all; the sacraments only to such as believe.

Question 68. How many sacraments has Christ instituted in the new covenant or testament?

Answer. Two, namely, holy baptism, and the holy supper.

EXPOSITION.

There are only two sacraments in the New Testament which are of perpetual, and universal use in the Church, according to the testimony of Ambrose and Augustin. The one is *baptism* which has taken the place of circumcision, and the various forms of purification prescribed by the law. The other is the *Lord's supper*, which was adumbrated by the Paschal Lamb and the various sacrifices of the law. These are the only sacraments of the New Testament; because they are the only ones instituted by Christ, and which he requires us to observe, adding thereto the promise of grace. This argument is conclusive: The definition of a sacrament agrees with only two rites established in the New Testament. Therefore we have only two sacraments.

The Papist add to these two sacraments five others; confirmation, penance, ordination, extreme unction, and matrimony. But these are not properly called sacraments. *Confirmation and unction* are indeed ceremonies, but they were not instituted by Christ for the whole church, nor have they the promise of grace annexed to them. *Confirmation, or the laying on of hands* in the primitive church was a sign of the miraculous giving of the Holy Ghost, which soon passed away; or of a calling to the office of teaching. The thing signified by *extreme unction*, with other miraculous gifts has also ceased in the church. *Penance, or private absolution* is nothing more than the preaching of the gospel, which ought not to be confounded with the signs and appendages of the promise of grace. *Order, or the ordination of*

ministers does indeed declare the presence of God in the ministry; but God may work effectually by the ministry, even though the men who hold the office do not please him. *Matrimony* is no ceremony, but a moral work. The Papists enumerate this among the sacraments, because it is called a mystery, and because the old translation renders the Greek μυστηριον, *sacramentum*. But Paul ought rather to be heard than the authority which is here adduced. No one is ignorant that mystery (μυστηριν) among the Greeks is of as broad a signification as *arcanum* among the Latins. Hence, to make their argument good, the Papists must admit that every mystery is a sacrament — marriage will then be the seventh sacrament; the will of God the eighth; (Eph. 1: 9.) the calling of the Gentiles the ninth; (Eph. 3: 3.) godliness the tenth; (1 Tim. 3: 16.) and so perhaps many others might be enumerated: for in all these references the Latin translation renders the word *mystery* a sacrament. But Paul in Eph. 5: 32, uses the word mystery to designate the union between Christ and the church, and not that between husband and wife.

Theses concerning the sacraments in general.

1. God has always joined to the promise of grace and eternal life, certain signs and rites, which the church calls sacraments. Circumcision was given to Abraham. By Moses, the sacrifices and rites of the church were greatly increased. These continued to the coming of Christ, who instituted baptism and the holy supper.

2. Sacraments are, therefore, the signs of the everlasting covenant between God and the faithful; that is, they are rites which God has instituted, and which he commands to be observed in the church, being added to the promise of grace, in order that he may thus, as it were by visible and certain signs, declare and testify that he communicates Christ and all his benefits to those who use these symbols by a true faith, according to the promise of the gospel, and that he may also in this way confirm their faith in the divine promise: whilst the faithful, on the other hand, by partaking of these signs publicly profess their faith and gratitude to God, and bind themselves to his promise, preserve and spread abroad the knowledge of Christ's benefits, be distinguished from sectarists, and excite and provoke one another to love under one head, even Christ.

3. Rites not commanded by God, or which have not been instituted for this end, that they may be signs of the promise of grace, are not signs of the church; for a sign can confirm nothing except by the consent and promise of him from whom the thing promised and signified is expected. Hence, no creature can institute signs of the divine will.

4. There are two things to be considered in all sacraments: the signs which are visible, earthly and corporal; these are the rites and ceremonies — the things which are visible and corporal which God exhibits to us by the minister, and which we received corporally; that is, by the members and senses of our body. Then we have the things signified, which are invisible, heavenly and spiritual, which include Christ himself and all his benefits, which are communicated unto us of God by faith spiritually; that is, by the virtue and power of the Holy Spirit.

5. The change of the signs is not physical, or natural, but merely relative; it has no respect to their nature or substance which remains the same, but only to their use.

6. The union between the signs and the things signified is in like manner not natural or local; but relative, by the appointment of God, by which things invisible and spiritual are represented by those that are visible and corporal, as by visible words, and are exhibited and received in connection with the signs in their lawful use.

7. The names and properties of the things signified are attributed to the signs; and, on the other hand, the names of the signs are attributed to the things signified, on account of their analogy, or on account of the signification of the things through the signs, and on account of the joint exhibition and reception of the things with the signs in their lawful use.

8. The lawful use of the sacraments consists in this, that the faithful observe those rites which God has prescribed to those ends for which the sacraments were instituted of God. The institution consists of rites, persons and ends, which being violated, it is abused.

9. The things signified, are always received in connection with the signs in the lawful use of the sacraments. The signs are, therefore, not by any means empty or insignificant, notwithstanding the things are received in one way, and the signs in another.

10. Without that use of the sacraments which God has appointed, neither the ceremonies have the nature of a sacrament, nor are the benefits of God signified by them, received with the signs.

11. The godly receive the signs to salvation; the ungodly to condemnation. It is, however, only the things signified, which the godly can receive to salvation.

12. Yet in the elect, after they are converted, the fruit of the sacrament unworthily received is at length obtained. And in them, also, the unworthiness which concurs on account of their faults and infirmities, even if they are sometimes chastened of God for the same, is so pardoned unto them, that this unworthiness does not endanger their salvation.

13. Some sacraments are to be received but once; others frequently. Some are to be given to adults only; others to infants also, even as they were instituted by God, either in once making the covenant with all the elect, and those who were to be received into the church, as circumcision and baptism, or, after many falls and conflicts, for the renewing of his covenant, for cherishing and promoting the unity of the church; as the ark, the passover, and other sacrifices; and also the Lord's Supper.

14. Those things which are included in the definition, belong in common to the sacraments of the old and new covenant, with these differences: that the old exhibited Christ, who was to come, with his benefits; whilst the new exhibit him as already come. The rites of the old were different and more in number, as circumcision, sacrifices, oblations, the passover, the sabbath and worshipping at the ark. Christians have only two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The old were more obscure; the new are clearer, and more apparent. The old belonged properly to the posterity of Abraham and their servants; the new are binding upon the whole church, gathered from the Jews and Gentiles.

15. The sacraments and the preaching of the gospel agree in this, that they are the work of God, which he exercises towards the church by his ministers, who teach, promise and offer unto us the same communion of Christ and all his benefits. They also agree in this, that they are the external means by which the Holy Ghost influences the heart to believe,

and so by means of faith makes us partakers of Christ and his benefits. Yet, notwithstanding all this, the Holy Ghost is not here limited or restricted in his operations; nor do the sacraments profit, but rather injure those who do not apply to themselves by faith what the word and sacraments signify.

16. The sacraments differ from the word in this, that they signify by actions and gestures what the word does by language. Faith is begun and confirmed by the word; by the sacraments it is only confirmed, as in the supper. The word teaches and confirms without the sacraments, but the sacraments not without the word. Adults are not saved without a knowledge of the word; but men may be regenerated and saved without the use of the sacraments, if this omission be not accompanied with any contempt. The word is preached to unbelievers and wicked men; the church should admit none to the sacraments, but such as God will have us to regard as members of his kingdom.

17. The sacraments have this in common with sacrifices, that they are works which God has commanded to be performed in faith. They differ in this, that God signifies and declares to us by a sacrament the benefits which he confers upon us; whilst we offer and show our obedience to God by a sacrifice.

18. The same ceremony may, therefore, be considered as a sacrament and sacrifice, as when God in giving us visible symbols declares his benefits to us, whilst we in receiving them testify our duty to him. Yet this declaration of our faith and gratitude, depends upon the declaration of God's benefits to us, as arising out of the chief and proper end and use of the sacraments, and is by this excited in the minds of the faithful.

TWENTY-SIXTH LORD'S DAY

OF BAPTISM.

Question 69. How art thou admonished and assured, by holy baptism, that the one sacrifice of Christ upon the cross is of real advantage to thee?

Answer. Thus, that Christ appointed this external washing with water, adding thereunto this promise, that I am as certainly washed by his blood and Spirit from all the pollution of my soul, that is, from all my sins, as I am washed externally with water, by which the filthiness of the body is commonly washed away.

EXPOSITION.

Concerning baptism we must enquire particularly:

I. *What it is:*
II. *What its design is:*
III. *What the words of the institution of baptism signify:*
IV. *In what the lawful use of baptism consists:*
V. *The forms of speech which are used in regard to it:*
VI. *The proper subjects of baptism:*
VII. *What baptism has taken the place of:*
VIII. *In what baptism and circumcision agree and differ.*

The first two propositions belong properly to the 69th and 70th Questions of the Catechism and will be considered in the exposition of these questions; the third and fourth belong to the 71st; the fifth to 71st and 72nd; the sixth to the 73rd; the seventh and eighth will be explained when we come to treat the subject of circumcision which immediately follows.

I. What Baptism is.

The word *baptism* comes from the Greek βαπτίζω, which is derived from βαπτω, which means to plunge, to dip, to wash, or to sprinkle. In the eastern church they were ordinarily immersed. Those, however, who lived in the colder regions of the north were commonly sprinkled with water. But this is a matter of no importance, as washing may be performed either by dipping or sprinkling. Baptism now is a washing.

The Catechism defines baptism to be *an external washing with water instituted by Christ, to which this promise is added, that when we are baptized, we are as certainly washed by his blood and Spirit from all the pol lution of our souls, that is from all our sins, as we are washed externally with water, by which the filthiness of the body is commonly washed away.* It may also be thus defined: Baptism is a sacred rite instituted by Christ in the New Testament, by which we are washed with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to signify that God receives us into his favor, on account of the blood which his Son shed for us, and that we are regenerated by his Spirit; and that we, on the other hand, bind ourselves to exercise faith in God, and to perform new obedience to him. Or, it is a sacrament of the New Testament instituted by Christ, which seals unto the faithful, who are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the remission of all their sins, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the ingrafting of them into the body and church of Christ; whilst they, on the other hand, profess that they receive these blessings, and that they ought, and will henceforth live unto him. *Or more briefly:* It is a washing with water appointed by the Son of God, during which these words are repeated: *I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*, to declare that he who is thus washed, whether by dipping or sprinkling; is reconciled to God by faith, and is sanctified by the Holy Spirit unto eternal life. We are said to be received into divine favor on account of the blood of Christ shed for us in his death upon the cross, which is the same as to say that we are reconciled on account of the entire humiliation of Christ applied unto us by faith. The words of the institution of baptism confirm this definition: "Go and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" (Matt. 28: 19) that is, testifying by the sign of baptism, that they are received into favor by the Father on account of the Son, and are sanctified by his Spirit. "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 1: 4; 16: 16.)

Baptism, therefore, includes these three things: 1. The sign, which is water, and the ceremony which is connected with it. 2. The things which are signified thereby, which include the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, the mortification of the old man, and the quickening of the new man. 3. The command and promise of Christ, from which the sign obtains its authority and power to confirm.

Obj. 1. Baptism is called an external washing with water. Therefore it is nothing more than a mere sign. Ans. This objection separates things which ought not to be disjoined; for when we say that baptism is an external sign, we connect with it the thing signified. Hence we do not add the exclusive particle *only*. Baptism without the promise would, indeed, be a mere naked sign; and to unbelievers, who do not receive the promise with faith, it is only an external washing with water, as in the case of Simon Magus; but the promise and the thing signified are joined with the sign in the proper use of the sacraments.

Obj. 2. There were baptisms, or washings under the Old Testament. Therefore baptism is not a sacrament peculiar to the New Testament. Ans. There is a great difference between the various washings prescribed by the law, and baptism as we have it. 1. Those washings were not signs of initiation into the church as baptism is. 2. Those washings were instituted for the purpose of removing ceremonial uncleanness, as if any one had polluted himself by touching a dead body, or any unclean thing, his ceremonial uncleanness had to be removed by a ceremonial washing: baptism, on the other hand, has been instituted for the purpose of washing away moral uncleanness, or sin. It is for this reason that the Scriptures declare baptism to be the washing away of sin. 3. Those washings signified a cleansing by and for the sake of Christ who was to come: baptism seals the same by and for the sake of Christ already come in the flesh. 4. Those washings were binding upon the Jews alone; baptism is binding upon all nations, or the whole church. Lastly, those washings were abolished by Christ, because ceremonial impurities, together with the ceremonial law itself, ceased when Christ came into the world: baptism, on the other hand, will continue to the end of time; for it is said, "Baptize all nations; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Those, therefore, who urge this objection are deceived by the ambiguity of the word *washings*, which has nothing in common with baptism, properly so called, except the name.

II. What are the ends of Baptism?

The chief end of baptism is, the confirmation of our faith, or a solemn declaration by which Christ testifies that he washes us with his blood and Spirit, and confers upon us remission of sins, and the Holy Ghost, who regenerates and sanctifies us unto eternal life. Or it is a sealing of the promise of grace, that is, of our justification and regeneration, and a declaration of the will of God, to this effect, that he here grants these gifts to those who are baptized, and that he will for ever grant them. For he himself baptizes us by the hand of the minister, and declares to us this his will.

That baptism is a declaration and confirmation of the will of God concerning our salvation which he promises to effect, and grant is evident: 1. From the formula of baptism, according to which we are baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. By this act we are given over to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and declared to be his property. 2. From the promise annexed to the rite of baptism: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16.) God declares, therefore, by this rite that he will save those that believe and are baptized. 3. From other passages of Scripture in which baptism is spoken of as a saving

ordinance. "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him in baptism," &c. "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ," &c. "According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 22: 16. Rom. 6: 3. Col. 2: 11. Titus 3: 5.)

From this it is evident why baptism is not repeated; because it is the sign of our reception into the favor and covenant of God, which remains for ever sure and valid in the case of those who repent. He, therefore, that has lost a sense of God's favor by falling into sin, does not need another application of baptism, but repentance for his sins. The same thing is also evident from the fact, that regeneration does not take place more than once in the same individual. We are born but once, and renewed but once: for he who is once truly ingrafted into Christ, is never wholly cast away: for "him that cometh to me," said Christ, "I will in no wise cast out." (John 6: 37.) Hence it is sufficient that baptism which is the washing of regeneration, should be received but once, especially since regeneration and salvation do not absolutely depend upon baptism; otherwise it would be necessary for us to be rebaptized as often as we might sin. To these reasons we may yet add, that baptism has taken the place of circumcision, which was never performed more than once upon the same individual.

From what has been said it is also evident that the baptism of John was the same in substance with christian baptism. John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, that those who heard him might believe on Jesus Christ, who was to come after him. This now is the character of the baptism which we have, with this difference, that we are baptized in the name of Christ as already come, and not about to come. Hence the baptism of John, and of the apostles, and that which we administer is the same as to substance, differing only as to the circumstance of signification. John baptized in the name of Christ who was to suffer and rise again: the apostles baptized, and we are now baptized in the name of Christ, who has already suffered and risen again: otherwise our baptism would not be the same as the baptism of Christ, who was baptized of John.

Obj. John said, "I baptize with water." Therefore it was a baptism of water only. Ans. John uses this language for the purpose of distinguishing his own ministry from the efficacy of Christ in baptism: for if this were not so it would follow that Christ was baptized merely with water; and that we are baptized in the same manner, or else we have not the same baptism which Christ had.

2. Another end of baptism is the declaration of our duty to God, and the binding of ourselves and the Church to gratitude, or to faith and repentance. *To faith*, that we may acknowledge for the true God, no one but this God, who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that we may worship him alone, and receive with faith the benefits which he offers. *To repentance*, that being continually admonished by this rite, that we are washed by the blood of Christ, and renewed by his Spirit, we may walk in newness of life, and thus shew our thankfulness to God for his benefits, according to what is said: "John preached the baptism of repentance." "Such were some of you; but ye are washed,"

&c. "How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death." Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like us Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Mark 1: 4. 1. Cor. 6: 11. Rom. 6: 2, 3, 4.) To be baptized *into Christ's death*, is to be made the partakers of all the benefits of his death, just as if we ourselves had died; and also to die unto sin, or to mortify the lust of the flesh by virtue of his death, and with him, be raised to a new life: for God promises, and binds us to this mortification of the old man in our baptism.

3. Baptism was appointed to be the sign of our entrance and reception into the church; because God will have all those who are members of his church to be admitted in this way, so that those who are not baptized, when they enjoy sufficient opportunities, are excluded from the church.

It is proper to make mention here of those passages of Scripture which affirm that all those who became christians, as the Ethiopian Eunuch, Cornelius the centurian, the Philippian Jailor, Lydia, Paul, &c., were immediately after their conversion, baptized. It is for this reason also that the Lord's Supper is given only to such as are baptized: for they alone have been received into the church. The words of the institution of baptism are also here in place: "Go, and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. The word which is here translated *teach*, means, according to its proper signification, *make disciples*, so that it may more properly be translated, *go and make disciples*, baptizing them, &c. It is thus rendered by John, in the fourth chapter and first verse of his gospel: "The Pharisees had heard, that Jesus made, and baptized more disciples," &c. The same thing is also established by the substitution of baptism in the place of circumcision, which was the sacrament of reception into the Jewish Church.

4. Baptism serves as a mark by which the true church may be discerned from all the various Sects which exist in the world. This end naturally grows out of the former; for those who are received into the church by a public sacrament, are by this, as by a badge, distinguished from the rest of mankind. "Go, and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c., as if he would say: "Gather me a church by my word, and those whom ye shall make my disciples, who believe with their whole hearts, baptize all of them, and them alone, and separate them for me from the rest of mankind."

5. Baptism was instituted to signify our taking of the cross, and to afford comfort concerning the preservation and deliverance of the church from all her afflictions. Those who are baptized are plunged, as it were, in affliction; but with the full assurance of deliverance. It is for this reason that Christ speaks of afflictions under the name of baptism, saying, "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" (Matt. 20: 22.) The ceremony connected with baptism intimates deliverance from our varied afflictions. We are immersed, but not drowned, or suffocated. It is in respect to this end that baptism is compared to the flood; for as in the flood, Noah and his family who were shut up in the ark were saved, yet not without much anxiety and peril, whilst the rest of mankind who were without the ark perished; so, those who are in the church, and who cleave to Christ, will most certainly be delivered at the proper time, although they may be pressed with afflictions and dangers from every side; whilst those who are out of the church will be overwhelmed

with the deluge of sin and destruction. We may here appropriately refer to the passage of Paul, where he compares the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea to baptism: "All were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." (1 Cor. 10: 2.)

6. Another end to be effected by baptism is to declare the unity of the church, and to establish that article of the Creed: *I believe in the holy catholic Church, the communion of the saints.* "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (1 Cor. 12: 13. Eph. 4: 5.) This end may be embraced under the fourth; because baptism in separating and distinguishing the members of the church from the rest of mankind, connects and unites them with the church, and with one another.

7. Baptism contributes to the preservation and spread of the doctrine which promises free salvation for the sake of Christ's death. It furnishes a suitable occasion for those who are baptized to learn who is the author, and what the signification and use of this sacrament.

Question 70. What is it to be washed with the blood and Spirit of Christ?

Answer. It is to receive of God the remission of sins, freely, for the sake of Christ's blood, which he shed for us by his sacrifice upon the cross; and also, to be renewed by the Holy Ghost, and sanctified to be members of Christ, that so we may more and more die unto sin, and lead holy and unblamable lives.

EXPOSITION.

There is in baptism a double washing: an external washing with water, and an internal washing with the blood and Spirit of Christ. The internal is signified and sealed by that which is external, and is always joined with it in the proper use of baptism. This internal washing is again two-fold, being a washing with the blood and Spirit of Christ. Both are specified in the answer of the Catechism, and may take place at the same time. To be washed with *the blood of Christ*, is to receive the pardon of sin, or to be justified on account of his shed-blood. To be washed *with the Spirit* of Christ, is to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, which consists in a change of evil inclinations into those which are good, which the Holy Ghost works in the will and heart, so as to produce in us hatred to sin, and a desire to live according to the will of God.

That this double washing from sin is signified by the sacrament of baptism, is evident from these declarations of Scripture: "John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The same thing is also taught when the Scriptures declare that we through baptism "are dead, and buried with Christ," "that we have put off the body of the sins of the flesh," "that we have put on Christ," &c. Baptism is, therefore, the sign of both these forms of washing, or benefits of Christ, which include the forgiveness of sin, and the renewing of our nature; and that not only because it has

some resemblance to both, but also because these two benefits are inseparably connected, so that neither one can be without the other. If Christ do not wash us we have no part in him, and he who has not the Spirit of Christ is none of his. These benefits, however, differ from each other. Justification, which is by the blood of Christ, is complete and perfect in this life by imputation, for "there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8: 1.) Regeneration, on the other hand, which is effected by the Spirit of Christ, and which consists in a change of our evil nature to that which is good, is not perfected, but only begun in this life; yet in such a manner that this beginning does really take place in all the godly, and is experienced by them as long as they are in this life, because they truly and heartily desire to obey God in all things, and are greatly grieved on account of their defects, and remaining corruption.

Question 71. Where has Christ promised us that he will as certainly wash us by his blood and Spirit, as we are washed with the water of baptism?

Answer. In the institution of baptism, which is thus expressed, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" "he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." This promise is also repeated, where the scripture calls baptism "the washing of regeneration, and the washing away of sins."

EXPOSITION.

The words employed by Christ in the institution of baptism, which are recorded by Matthew and Mark, embody the proof of the definition, and principal ends of baptism which we have already explained, "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Math. 28: 19. Mark 16: 16.) These words require a short explanation.

Go ye, and teach all nations: as if he would say, do not confine your instructions to the posterity of Abraham, or to particular nations; but go and teach the whole world. Christ here removes the wall which had hitherto separated the Jews from all other nations, and makes a distinction between the sacraments of the Old and the New Testament. The Old were instituted for the Jews only, but Christ here declares that baptism was not for the Jews only, but for all nations.

Baptizing them: that is, all those who come unto me through your teaching, and are made my disciples. The children, also, of such as come unto Christ, and are his disciples, are included amongst the number of those who are proper subjects of baptism; for these are also disciples of Christ, being born in the church, which to infants is the same as a profession of faith. The order which Christ here lays down must be observed. He commands that they should first be taught, and afterwards baptized, because he speaks of adults who might be converted to Christianity, and declares that the sacraments should not be alone, but joined with the word. The word ought to precede, and the sacraments follow in the case of adults.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: The words *in the name of*, signify, 1. That baptism was instituted by the command and authority of the three persons of the Godhead in common, and that they command that those who will be members of the church should be thus baptized. When the minister baptizes, his act is just as valid as if God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost performed it. From this it follows in like manner, that these three persons are the three divine, and consubstantial subsistents of the Godhead, and that they constitute the one true God in whom we are baptized. 2. They signify that these three persons confirm unto us by their own declaration, that they receive us into their favor, and will truly grant us all the benefits which are signified by baptism, if we believe. And this, we may here observe, is the principal end of baptism. 3. To be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is to bind the person baptized to the knowledge, faith, worship, trust and honor of this true God, who is the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, which is the second end of baptism, which Paul thus expresses: "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul;" (1 Cor. 1: 13;) as if he would say, Ye ought to bind yourselves to him, in whose name ye were baptized.

He that believeth: The condition of faith is joined to the promise; for those who are baptized do not receive that which is promised and sealed by baptism unless they have faith, so that without faith the promise is not ratified, and baptism is of no profit. In these words we have expressed in a concise manner the proper use of baptism, in which the sacraments are always ratified to those who receive them in faith; whilst the sacraments are no sacraments, and profit nothing in their improper use.

The proper use of baptism consists in these things: 1. In observing those ceremonies and rites which are of divine appointment; all others are to be rejected. Hence it is evident that the various corruptions which the Papists have connected with the administration of this sacrament, such as the use of oil, spittle, exorcism, tapers, salt, and such like are to be thrown away as idle inventions. And as to the argument which the Papists employ in justifying these things; that they belong to the order, and significance of baptism; we may reply that the Holy Ghost knew full well what was necessary for the order and propriety of baptism; and as he has not instituted them, they do not properly belong to it. And as to their signification it is sufficient to reply that it does not belong to men to institute signs to express the will of God; which may be said in regard to all other corruptions of a similar nature.

2. The right use of baptism consists in administering it to those for whom it was instituted, that is for those who are converted and members of the church, and when they receive it in true faith, according as it is said: "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest be baptized." (Acts 8: 37.)

3. Baptism is properly used when it is observed with the design for which it was instituted, and not for the healing of cattle and abuses of a similar character.

4. When it is administered by the ministers of the church to whom Christ has limited it, and whom he has sent to teach and baptize, and not by women and others whom God has not sent.

And is baptized: Christ designs to confirm us by this sign. Hence he adds, *and is baptized*, that we may know by this external washing with

water, as well as by our faith, that we are of the number of those who shall be saved.

Shall be saved, that is, he that is baptized may know that he enjoys the benefits which are signified by this sacrament, which consist in justification, and regeneration if he believe. For the promise is not ratified without faith, neither is baptism of any profit when thus received. The promise of salvation is added both to faith and baptism, but in a different respect. It is added to faith, as the necessary means by which we receive salvation; and to baptism, as the sign which seals that which faith receives.

He that believeth not, shall be damned; that is, even though he may have been baptized. The use of baptism does not save without faith. Not to be baptized does not condemn, if there be no contempt of this sacrament; for not the want, but the contempt of the sacraments condemns. But there can never be any contempt of the sacraments where there is faith. And hence it is that Christ does not retain both members of the first proposition in that which stands in opposition to the promise; he merely says: "He that believeth not, shall be damned." Christ makes this distinction, because there is not the same necessity for faith and baptism to salvation. Faith is absolutely necessary to salvation, so that no one can be saved without it: for "without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11: 16.) But the sacraments are necessary when they may be observed according to divine appointment. Contempt of the sacraments under such circumstances, is inconsistent with faith. This is the reason why Christ promises salvation to those that believe and are baptized, keeping in view the distinction which is here made. Yet he does not deny salvation to those who are deprived of this sacrament.

TWENTY-SEVENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 72. Is then the external baptism with water, the washing away of sin itself?

Answer. Not at all, for the blood of Jesus Christ only, and the Holy Ghost, cleanse us from all sin.

EXPOSITION.

The same division which we made when speaking of the sacraments in general, is also true of baptism, that there are some forms of speech which are proper, and others which are improper. These forms of speech are called sacramental. It is a proper form of speech when those who receive the sign are said to receive the thing signified, as "he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." The same is true when the sign is said to signify the thing, as when it is said, "baptism is the sign of the washing away of sin." "He gave unto them circumcision to be a sign of the covenant." *Improper* or figurative forms of speech are when the sign is said to be the thing itself, as "Baptism is the washing of regeneration;" and when the sacrament is said to confer the thing, or things pertaining to that which is

signified, as when baptism is said to save us. All these forms of speech may be said to have this one signification: Baptism is a certain sign of the remission of sin, and of everlasting life to them that believe: for the figurative speeches which are used in reference to the sacraments are to be interpreted in the same manner as the figurative speeches in reference to sacrifices. Sacrifices are often called expiations for sin, and yet the apostle Paul affirms that the blood of bulls, and of goats, cannot take away sin. So when it is said, "Baptism saves us," is "the washing of regeneration," and "the washing away of sin;" it is the same thing as to say, Baptism is the sign of all these things.

Question 73. Why then doth the Holy Ghost call baptism "the washing of regeneration," and "the washing away of sins?"

Answer. God speaks thus not without great cause, to wit, not only thereby to teach us, that, as the filth of the body is purged away by water, so our sins are removed by the blood and Spirit of Jesus Christ; but especially that, by this divine pledge and sign, he may assure us that we are spiritually cleansed from our sins as really as we are externally washed with water.

EXPOSITION.

There are three reasons which may be assigned why the Scriptures thus speak, interchanging the names of the signs, and the things signified. The *first* is on account of the analogy which there is between the sign, and the thing signified. The thing signified is according to its own nature, such as the sign is according to its nature, the opposite of which is also true: for as water which is the sign, washes away the filthiness of the body, so the blood and Spirit of Christ, which are the things signified, wash away the pollution of the soul: and as the minister applies the sign outwardly, so God by virtue of his Spirit applies inwardly the thing signified to all those who receive the sign with true faith. *Secondly*, the Holy Ghost thus speaks for the confirmation of our faith through the use of the signs: for the signs used in the sacraments testify the will of God to us on account of the promise annexed thereto: "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." But why does the Holy Ghost thus speak for the confirmation of our faith? Because in the proper use of the sacraments the exhibition and reception of the signs, and things signified, are inseparably connected. And hence the Holy Ghost interchanges the terms, attributing what belongs to the thing signified to the sign, and what belongs to the sign to the thing, to teach us what he gives, and to assure us that he does really give it. The *third* reason, therefore, why such language is employed is because the exhibition of the things signified, is inseperably connected with the signs used in the sacraments.

Question 74. Are infants also to be baptized?

Answer. Yes, for since they as well as the adult are included in the covenant and church of God; and since redemption from sin by the blood of Christ, and the Holy Ghost, the author of faith, is promised to them no less than to the adult; they

must, therefore, by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, be also admitted into the Christian Church, and be distinguished from the children of infidels, as was done in the old covenant or testament by circumcision, instead of which baptism was instituted in the new covenant.

EXPOSITION.

For a proper understanding of this question we shall consider, first, *Who ought to receive, and Who ought to desire baptism?* Those who are not yet disciples of Christ, not being of the number of those who are called, and not believing the doctrine of the gospel, nor obeying the ministry, are not to receive baptism. Nor ought those who feel that they are not the disciples of Christ to desire baptism. And the reason why they ought neither to receive, nor desire baptism, is, because Christ says, first, teach or make all nations my disciples, and then baptize them. Hence all, and only those are to be baptized according to the command of Christ, who are, and ought to be regarded as members of the visible church, whether they be adults professing repentance and faith, or infants born in the church; for all the children of those that believe are included in the covenant, and church of God, unless they exclude themselves. They are, therefore, also disciples of Christ, because they are born in the church, or school of Christ; and hence the Holy Spirit teaches them in a manner adapted to their capacity and age.

From what we have now said, we may easily determine whether infants are to be baptized. If they are disciples of Christ, and included in the church, (which we may fully establish by the covenant itself, and many other passages of Scripture) they are fit subjects for baptism. The Catechism adduces four reasons why infants, as well as adults, are to be baptized.

First, all that belong to the covenant and church of God are to be baptized. But the children of christians, as well as adults, belong to the covenant and church of God. Therefore they are to be baptized as well as adults. The major proposition is proven from the command of Christ, which requires the whole church to be baptized. "Go, and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. And Paul says: "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." (1 Cor. 12: 13.) The minor proposition is clear from the covenant itself in which God declares, "I will be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee:" and from what Christ says: "Suffer little children to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." (Gen. 17: 7. Matt. 19: 14.)

Secondly, those are not to be excluded from baptism, to whom the benefit of the remission of sins, and of regeneration belongs. But this benefit belongs to the infants of the church; for redemption from sin, by the blood of Christ and the Holy Ghost, the author of faith, is promised to them no less than to the adult. Therefore they ought to be baptized. The major of this syllogism is proven by the words of Peter: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ; for the promise is unto you and your children." "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we." (Acts 2: 38, 35; 10: 47.) The same thing is established by this argument: Those unto whom the things signified belong, unto them the sign also belongs, unless there be some condition in the way of using it which would forbid it, or unless there be some circumstance connected with the institution which

would not admit of the observance of the rite, as females formerly were debarred from circumcision on account of their sex, and as infants at this day are excluded from the Lord's Supper because of their incapacity of shewing the Lord's death, and proving themselves. The minor is manifest from the language of the covenant: "I will be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee:" and from the following passages of Scripture: "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." "The promise is unto you, and your children." "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant, which God made with our fathers." "Your children are holy." "For if the root be holy, so are the branches." (Matt. 19: 14. Acts 2: 39; 3: 25. 1 Cor. 7: 14. Rom. 11: 16.) So John the Baptist was sanctified from his mother's womb. He who will now diligently examine these testimonies from the word of God, will see that it is not only lawful, but that baptism ought to be administered to infants also; for they are holy; the promise is unto them; the kingdom of heaven is theirs; and God, who is certainly not the God of the wicked, declares that he will also be their God. Neither is there any condition in infants which would forbid the use of baptism. Who then can forbid water, or exclude them from baptism, seeing that they are partakers with the whole church of the same blessings?

3. A sacrament, which God has instituted to be a solemn rite of initiation into the church, and which is designed to distinguish the church from all the various sects, ought to be extended to all, of whatever age they may be, to whom the covenant and reception into the church rightfully belong. Baptism now is such a sacrament. Therefore it ought to be administered to all ages, and as a necessary consequence to infants also; for to whom the final cause belongs, to him the effect is properly and necessarily attributed.

Fourthly, under the Old Testament infants were circumcised as well as adults. Baptism occupies the place of circumcision in the New Testament, and has the same use that circumcision had in the Old Testament. Therefore infants are to be baptized as well as adults. The first proposition needs no proof. The second is proven by what the apostle Paul says: "Ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein ye are also risen with him." (Col. 2: 11, 12.) Baptism, therefore, is our circumcision, or the sacrament by which the same things are confirmed unto us, and to as many under the New Testament as under the Old by circumcision.

The Anabaptists, therefore, in denying baptism to the children of the church, do not only deprive them of their rights, but they also prevent the grace of God from being seen in its richness, since God wills that the offspring of the faithful should be included amongst the members of the church, even from the womb: yea they manifestly detract from the grace of the New Covenant, and narrow down that of the old, inasmuch as they refuse to extend baptism to infants, to whom circumcision was formerly extended; they weaken the comfort of the church, and of faithful parents; they set aside the solemn obligation by which God will have the offspring of his people consecrated to him from their very infancy, distinguished, and separated from the world; they weaken in parents and children the sense of gratitude, and the desire which they should have to perform their

obligations to God; they boldly contradict the apostles who declare that water should not be forbidden those to whom the Holy Ghost is given; they wickedly keep back from Christ infants whom he has commanded to be brought to him; and lastly, they narrow down the universal command of Christ which requires that all should be baptized. From all these things it is clear that the denial of infant baptism is no trifling error, but a grievous heresy, in direct opposition to the word of God, and the comfort of the church. Wherefore this and similar follies of the sect of the Anabaptists should be carefully avoided, since they have, without doubt, been hatched by the devil, and are detestable heresies which they have fabricated from various errors and blasphemies.

Obj. 1. No doctrine is to be received which the Scriptures do not teach expressly, nor by example. But the Scriptures do not teach the doctrine of infant baptism by any command or example. Therefore, it is not to be received by the church. Ans. We deny the minor proposition: for we have the express command, "Baptize all nations," which includes the children of the church. There are, also, instances recorded in the Scriptures where whole families were baptized by the Apostles, without any intimation that the infant members of these families were excluded. "Lydia was baptized and her household." The Philippian jailor "was baptized and all his." "I baptized also the household of Stephanus." (Acts 16: 15, 33. 1 Cor. 1: 16.) To this answer the following objections are brought forward:

Obj. 1. But Christ does not expressly command that infants should be baptized. Ans. Neither does he expressly say that adults, men, women, citizens, husbandmen, fullers, and other artizans, such as the Anabaptists for the most part are, should be baptized. He commands that all who are included in the covenant and church of God should be baptized, of whatever age, sex, or rank they may be. Nor is there any necessity that there should be an express reference to every age and rank in general laws and commands; because what is thus enjoined, is binding upon a whole class, and so includes all the separate parts which are comprehended in it. The Anabaptists themselves do not exclude women from the Lord's Supper, and yet they have no express command, nor example for this practice in the Scriptures. We have a general command in relation to baptism: for it is said, "Go, and teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. This command requires that all who are disciples should be baptized. But infants are disciples, because they are born in the church, and are taught after their manner. Peter, likewise, commands the same thing when he says, "The promise is unto you and your children; therefore be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ." "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we." (Acts 2: 39; 10: 47.) Paul teaches the same thing when he says that we are circumcised in Christ, and buried with him by baptism. Therefore, our baptism has taken the place of circumcision, which substitution is equal to an express command.

Obj. 2. Those who are to be baptized must be first taught, for it is said, "teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. But infants cannot be taught. Therefore, they are not fit subjects for baptism. Ans. The major proposition is true of adults, who are capable of being taught, from which class of persons the first members of the church were gathered. These Christ

command first to be taught, and then to be baptized, so as to be distinguished from the world. But it is false if applied to infants who are born in the church, or who become connected with it when their parents believe and make a profession of their faith; because, Christ does not speak of infants, but of adults, who are capable of being taught, and who ought not to be received into the church unless they are first taught. Infants are included in the covenant, because God says, "I will be a God unto thee and thy seed," even before they were capable of being instructed. Therefore, they are also to be baptized.

Obj. 3. But, in the examples recorded in the Scriptures where it is said whole families were baptized, the whole, by a figure of speech, is taken for a part, so that these instances merely teach that those who believed and made a confession of their faith were baptized. Therefore, infant baptism cannot be proven from these examples. Ans. We deny the antecedent; because the Apostles in recording these household baptisms intimate no such exclusion, and it is wrong to have recourse to a figure of speech, when there is no reason for rejecting the natural interpretation of any passage of Scripture.

Obj. 4. There are two reasons in favor of this synecdoche: the one is, that the Apostles did nothing contrary to the command and institution of Christ; the other is, that the circumstances connected with these examples exclude infants; for it is said, "they preached the word to all that were in his house;" "that they rejoiced," and "that they ministered to the saints;" which cannot be applied to infants. Therefore, they are excluded. Ans. The first reason which intimates that infant baptism is opposed to the appointment of Christ, is false, for Christ wills that all who belong to him and his church should be separated from the world by baptism, as we have shown. It is not true, therefore, that the Apostles refused to administer baptism to infants, according to the institution of Christ. And as to the second reason, it is of no force; for the children could be baptized with their parents, although none but their parents and other members of the family of adult age heard the words of the Apostles, and ministered unto their wants; because their age might exclude them from understanding the doctrine of the Apostles, or from ministering to them, but not from baptism, any more than from salvation. Hence, it was said to Cornelius, "Peter shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." Rejecting, therefore, such vain cavils, we must firmly hold to the doctrine that infant baptism was commanded by Christ, and was always practiced by the Apostles and the whole church. Augustin says: "*The whole church holds to the doctrine of infant baptism by tradition.*" And he concludes: "*What the whole church holds and has always retained, although it has not been decreed by any council, that it is just as proper for us to believe, as if it had been delivered and handed down by apostolic authority.*"

Obj. 2. Those who do not believe, are not to be baptized; for it is said, "He that believeth and is baptized," &c. But infants do not believe. Therefore, they are not to be baptized. Faith is necessarily required for the use of baptism, for he that believeth not shall be damned. But the sign of grace ought not to be given to such as are condemned. Ans. 1. The first proposition is not true, if understood generally; for circumcision was applied to infants, although they were not capable of exercising faith. It must, therefore, be understood of adults only, who are not to be baptized

except they believe. Neither can our opponents say of adults that they do certainly believe. If infants, therefore, are not to be baptized because they do not believe, then neither are those to be baptized who have arrived to years of understanding, because no one can certainly know whether they have faith or not. Simon Magus was baptized, and yet he was a hypocrite. But, say our opponents, the church ought to be satisfied with a profession of faith. This we admit, and would add, that to be born in the church, is, to infants, the same thing as a profession of faith. 2. Faith is, indeed, necessary to the use of baptism with this distinction. Actual faith is required in adults, and an inclination to faith in infants. There are, therefore, four terms in this syllogism, or there is a fallacy in understanding that as spoken particularly, which must be understood generally. Those who do not believe, that is, who have no faith at all, neither by profession nor by inclination, are not to be baptized. But infants born of believing parents have faith as to inclination. 3. We also deny the minor proposition; for infants do believe after their manner, or according to the condition of their age; they have an inclination to faith. Faith is in infants potentially and by inclination, although not actually as in adults. For, as infants born of ungodly parents who are without the church, have no actual wickedness, but only an inclination thereto, so those who are born of godly parents have no actual holiness, but only an inclination to it; not according to nature, but according to the grace of the covenant. And still further: infants have the Holy Ghost, and are regenerated by him. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb, and Jeremiah is said to have been sanctified before he came out of the womb. (Luke 1: 15. Jer. 1: 5.) If infants now have the Holy Ghost, he certainly works in them regeneration, good inclinations, new desires, and such other things as are necessary for their salvation, or he at least supplies them with every thing that is requisite for their baptism, according to the declaration of Peter, "Can any man forbid water to them who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we." It is for this reason that Christ enumerates little children amongst those that believe, saying, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me." (Matt. 18: 6.) In as much now as infants are fit subjects for baptism, they do not profane it as the Anabaptists wickedly affirm.

Obj. 3. But if the sign of the covenant belongs to all those to whom its promise belongs, then the Lord's Supper ought also to be administered to infants, because it is also a sign of the covenant. But it is not administered to infants. Therefore, they ought not to be baptized. Ans. We do not say that every sign ought to be applied to infants; but only that there must be some sign of initiation into the church, which, in the new covenant, is baptism. This does not exclude infants, for it merely requires the Holy Ghost, and faith, whether it be actual or potential, as appears from the words of Peter, "Can any man forbid water," &c. Or, if the objection be thus framed: Infants ought to be admitted to the Lord's Supper if they are to be baptized, in as much as the Lord's Supper is designed for the whole church, as well as baptism. But they are not admitted to the Lord's Supper. Therefore, they are not to be baptized: We reply, by denying the consequence, because there is a great difference between baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is the sacrament of initiation, and reception into the church, so that none are to be admitted to the Lord's Supper, unless

they be first baptized. But the Lord's Supper is the sacrament of our abiding in the church, or it is the confirmation of our reception: for God has instituted it that he might declare, and seal unto us, this truth, that having once received us into the church, he will for ever preserve us, so that we shall not fall away from it; and that he will also continue the benefits once bestowed upon us, and will feed and nourish us upon the body and blood of Christ unto eternal life. Adults, who are beset with various temptations and trials need this support. Again: regeneration by the Holy Ghost, and faith, or an inclination to faith and repentance are sufficient for baptism; but in the Lord's Supper there are conditions added, and required which exclude infants from its use. It is required of those that observe it, that they shew the Lord's death, and examine themselves whether they have repentance and faith. In as much now as infants are incapacitated to do this on account of their age, it is evident that they are justly excluded from the Lord's Supper, but not from baptism. It does not follow, therefore, that infants are to be at once admitted to the Lord's Supper, because they are to be baptized; for they are to be admitted only to those sacraments which are signs of reception into the covenant and church, and which have no conditions that exclude them on account of their age. Baptism now is such a sacrament in the New Testament; but it is different with the Lord's Supper.

Obj. 4. But if baptism has come in the place of circumcision, then none but males ought now to be baptized, and they on the eighth day after their birth. But both males and females are now baptized. Therefore, baptism has not taken the place of circumcision. Ans. Baptism has not succeeded circumcision in all the circumstances connected with it, but in the thing signified, and as to its end and use. The two sacraments agree in these things; whilst they differ as to the circumstance of age and sex. God restricted circumcision expressly to the males, and spared the females. Yet he included them among the males, in as much as being born of circumcised parents was to them in the place of circumcision. They were circumcised in the males, or what is the same thing, they were accounted as circumcised. It is for this reason that Christ calls a holy woman "a daughter of Abraham;" and the sons of Jacob said: "we cannot give our sister to one that is uncircumcised," thus making a distinction between the expressions *our sister* and *one that is uncircumcised*. (Luke 13: 16. Gen. 34: 14.) God, therefore, formerly made an exception in the case of females, and ordained circumcision on the eighth day. But in baptism these things are not determined; but the command is general, requiring all the children of the faithful to be ingrafted into the church, whether it be on the eighth day, or immediately after their birth.

Theses concerning Baptism.

1. Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, by which Christ testifies to the faithful who are baptized with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the forgiveness of all their sins, the giving of the Holy Spirit, and ingrafting into the church and into his own body; whilst they, on the other hand, profess to receive these benefits from God, and will and ought, therefore, henceforth, to live unto him and to serve him. This same baptism was begun by John the Baptist, and carried forward by the Apostles.

John baptized in the name of Christ, who was to suffer and rise again; the Apostles baptized in the name of Christ, as having suffered and risen from the dead.

2. The first end of baptism instituted by God is, that he might thereby declare and testify to us, that he cleanses those who are baptized by his blood and Spirit from all their sins, and therefore engrafts them into the body of Christ and makes them partakers of all his benefits. 2. That baptism might be a solemn reception or initiation of every one into the visible church, and a mark by which the church might be known from all other religions. 3. That it might be a public and solemn profession of our faith in Christ, and of our obligation to faith and obedience to him. 4. That it might be an admonition of our burial in afflictions, and of our rising out of them and deliverance from them.

3. Baptism has the power to declare or seal according to the command of God, and the promise which Christ has joined to it in its lawful use; for Christ baptizes us by the hand of his ministers, just as he speaks through them.

4. There is, therefore, in baptism a double water; the one external and visible, which is elementary; the other internal, invisible and heavenly, which is the blood and Spirit of Christ. There is, also, a double washing in baptism; the one external, visible, and signifying, viz: the sprinkling and pouring of water, which is perceptible by the members and senses of the body; the other is internal, invisible, and signified, viz: the remission of sins on account of the blood of Christ shed for us, and our regeneration by the Holy Spirit and engrafting into his body, which is spiritual, and perceived only by faith and the Spirit. Lastly, there is a double dispenser of baptism: the one an external dispenser of the external, which is the minister of the church, baptizing us by his hand with water; the other an internal dispenser of the internal, which is Christ himself, baptizing us with his blood and Spirit.

5. Yet the water is not changed into the blood or Spirit of Christ, nor is the blood of Christ present in the water, or in the same place with the water. Nor are the bodies of those who are baptized washed with this visibly; nor is the Holy Spirit, by his substance or virtue, more in this water than elsewhere; but he works in the hearts of those who are baptized in the lawful use of baptism, and sprinkles and washes them spiritually by the blood of Christ, whilst he uses this external symbol as a means, and as a visible word or promise to stir up and confirm the faith of those who are baptized.

6. When baptism is, therefore, said to be the laver or washing of regeneration, to save us, or to wash away sins, it is meant that the external baptism is a sign of the internal, that is, of regeneration, salvation and of spiritual absolution; and this internal baptism is said to be joined with that which is external, in the right and proper use of it.

7. Yet sin is so washed away in baptism, that we are delivered from exposure to divine wrath and from the condemnation of everlasting punishment, whilst the Holy Ghost commences in us the work of regeneration and conformity with God. Remissions of sins, however, continue to the end of life.

8. All, and only those who are renewed or being renewed, receive bap-

tism lawfully, being baptized for those ends for which Christ instituted this sacrament.

9. The church administers baptism lawfully to all, and only to those whom she ought to regard among the number of the regenerate, or as members of Christ.

10. Since the infant children of Christians are also included in the church, into which Christ will have all those who belong to him to be received and enrolled by baptism; and as baptism has been substituted in the place of circumcision, by which (as well to the infants as to the adults belonging to the seed of Abraham,) justification, regeneration and reception into the church were sealed by and for the sake of Christ; and as no one can forbid water that those should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit purifying their hearts, it follows that those infants should be baptized, who are either born in the church, or come into it from the world with their parents.

11. As the promise of the gospel, so baptism being unworthily received, that is, before conversion, is ratified and tends to salvation to those who repent, so that the use of it which was before unlawful is now lawful.

12. The impiety of the minister does not make baptism void, if only it be performed in the promise and faith of Christ. It is for this reason that the true church does not re-baptize those who have been baptized by heretics, but instructs them in the true doctrine respecting Christ and baptism.

13. And as the covenant once made with God, is also after sins have been committed, perpetually ratified in the case of such as believe, so baptism also being once received, confirms all those who repent in relation to the forgiveness of sins during their whole lives; and, therefore, neither ought to be repeated, nor deferred to the close of life, as if it then only cleansed from sin, when no more sins are committed after it is received.

14. All those who are baptized with water, whether adults or infants, are not made partakers of the grace of Christ, for the eternal election of God and his calling to the kingdom of Christ, is free.

15. Nor are all those who are not baptized excluded from the grace of Christ, for not the want, but the contempt of baptism excludes men from the covenant of God made with the faithful and their children.

16. Since the administration of the sacraments forms a part of the ecclesiastical ministry, those who are not called to this, and especially women, ought not to take upon themselves the right and authority to baptize.

17. Such rites as have been added to baptism by men, as the consecration of the water, tapers, exorcisms, anointing with oil, salt, crosses, spittle, and things of a similar character, are justly condemned in the church of Christ, as corruptions of the sacraments.

OF CIRCUMCISION.

The last two general propositions under the subject of baptism, are closely allied to the doctrine of circumcision. Whatever, too, may be said upon the subject of circumcision, is intimately connected with baptism, and is, therefore, properly considered at this point. The things which claim special attention in connection with the subject of circumcision, are the following:

I. *What circumcision is:*
II. *Why it was instituted:*
III. *Why it was abolished:*
IV. *What there is in the place of circumcision:*
V. *In what circumcision and baptism agree and differ:*
VI. *Why Christ was circumcised.*

I. What circumcision is.

Circumcision was a rite by which all the males among the children of Israel were circumcised according to the command of God, that it might be a seal of the covenant made with the posterity of Abraham. Or, it consisted in cutting off the fore-skin of all the males among the children of Israel by the command of God, that it might be a sign of the covenant made with Abraham and his posterity, signifying and sealing to them the cutting off the fore-skin of their hearts for the sake of the promised seed which should be born, distinguishing and separating them from all other nations, and binding them to faith and obedience to God. "This is my covenant which ye shall keep, between me and you, and thy seed after thee: every man-child among you shall be circumcised," &c. "He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith," &c. "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart," &c. (Gen. 17: 10. Rom. 4: 11. Deut. 30: 6.) Circumcision was binding only upon the Jews. It was optional with other nations to be circumcised, or not, if they embraced the Jewish religion.

The membership of the Jewish Church was made up of three different classes of persons. There were first *Israelites*, those who were born of the seed of Abraham, who were bound by the law to observe circumcision, and other rites. Then there were *proselytes*, persons who embraced the Jewish religion from other nations, and who submitted to circumcision, and the whole ceremonial law for the confirmation of their faith. There is a reference to this class of persons in Acts 2: 10; Matt. 23: 15. Then there were lastly *religious men*, who were converted to the Jewish faith from among the Gentiles, and embraced the doctrine and promises of God; but were not circumcised; neither did they conform to the ceremonial law; because the Gentiles were left free, either to conform to the customs of the Jewish religion or not. Of this class we may mention Naaman, the Syrian, the Ethiopian eunuch, and others of whom we read in Acts 2: 5.

Obj. None but males were circumcised. Therefore females were excluded from the covenant of grace. Ans. They were included in the circumcision of the males; because God spared their weaker sèx. It was sufficient for them that they were born of circumcised parents, and were in view of this included in the covenant and seed of Abraham.

II. Why circumcision was instituted.

It was instituted, 1. That it might be a sign of the grace of God to the posterity of Abraham, and that for two reasons; because God would receive into the covenant those that believed on account of the Messiah, which was to come; and also, because he would grant them the land of

Canaan, and there give his church a sure resting place until the Messiah would make his appearance. 2. That it might be the means of binding Abraham and his posterity to gratitude, or to repentance and faith, and thus to the observance of the whole law. 3. That it might be a badge of distinction between the Jews and other nations and religionists. 4. That it might be the sacrament of initiation and reception into the visible church. 5. That it might signify that all men are unholy by natural generation, and remind them of their natural uncleanness, and of the importance of guarding against all forms of sin, especially those which are in opposition to the law of chastity. "Circumcise the fore-skin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked." "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the fore-skins of your heart." (Deut. 10: 16. Jer. 4: 4.) 6. That it might be a sign to declare unto them that the way of deliverance from sin, would be through Christ, who should be born of the seed of Abraham. "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 22: 18.)

III. Why circumcision was abolished.

It was abolished because the thing which it signified became real; and also because it had been instituted for the purpose of separating the Jews from all other nations, which state of things ceased after the coming of Christ. It became necessary, therefore, that the type of circumcision should be abolished, when the Messiah made his appearance, and the nations of the earth were no longer to be separated, as they had been; for it is the part of a wise law-giver when certain causes are changed, to modify and change those laws and institutions which are depending upon these causes.

IV. What there is in the place of circumcision.

Baptism occupies the place of circumcision in the New Testament. One sacrament succeeds another, when the one is abolished, and the other takes its place, in such a way as to signify the same thing by different rites, and to have the same design and use. That baptism has succeeded circumcision in this sense is plain from what the apostle Paul says: "In whom also ye are circumcised, with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism wherein also ye are risen with him," &c. (Col. 2: 11, 12.) The Apostle in these words proves by two arguments that there is now no advantage derived from the circumcision of the flesh, and that it is no longer to be observed in the Christian Church. The first is, because we have in Christ a spiritual circumcision—one not made with hands, whose sign is a circumcision of the flesh, or because Christ has now fulfilled what circumcision prefigured. The second is because baptism has now the same signification and use, which circumcision formerly had, unless that baptism is the sign of that which circumcision shadowed forth. This passage, therefore, teaches that baptism is the same to Christians, which circumcision was to the Jews. And that baptism has taken the place of circumcision, may also be proven from the fact that both sacraments have the same end. Both are signs of our adoption into the family of God. For as the infants of the Jews and proselytes were circumcised on the eighth day, as those who were members of the church by birth, whilst adults received

circumcision when they made a profession of the Jewish religion; so the children of Christians are baptized in their infancy, whilst those who have arrived to years of understanding are not baptized, unless they have made a profession of the doctrine of Christ.

V. In what circumcision and baptism agree and differ.

They agree, 1. In their chief design, which is to seal unto us the promise of grace by and for the sake of Christ, which promise is always the same. 2. Both signify our regeneration, and bind us to faith and obedience. 3. Both are sacraments of initiation and reception into the church.

They differ, 1. In outward rites and ceremonies. 2. In the circumstance of age and sex. None but males were circumcised, and these always on the eighth day after their birth, which is different in regard to baptism. 3. They differ as to their signification. Circumcision promised grace on account of the Messiah which was to come; baptism on account of the Messiah already come. 4. They differ as to the promise which is peculiar to each. Circumcision had connected with it the promise of a temporal blessing, that the church should find a sure resting place in the land of Canaan until the Messiah would come; baptism has no such special promise of any temporal blessing. 5. They differ in the obligation which they impose. Circumcision bound those who observed it to keep the whole ceremonial, judicial and moral law; baptism binds us to the moral law only, or which is the same thing, to repentance and faith. 6. They differ in their objects and duration. Circumcision was instituted for the posterity of Abraham alone, and was designed to continue only to the coming of the Messiah; baptism was instituted for all nations desiring to come into connection with the church, and will continue to the end of the world.

VI. Why Christ was circumcised.

There was nothing to require the circumcision of Christ, inasmuch as it could not seal or confer anything upon him, for he had no sin. Yet he submitted to circumcision, 1. That he might establish his membership amongst those who were circumcised. It was for the same reason that he was baptized. Christ then submitted himself to the initiatory sacrament of both churches that he might declare that he was the head, the saviour, and corner-stone of both, and that he would constitute one church. 2. That he might declare that he took all our sins upon himself, that he would satisfy for them, and would deliver us from all our guilt. "He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. (2 Cor. 5: 21. Is. 53: 5.) 3. That he might declare that it was for our sakes that he became subject to the law, and that he perfectly fulfilled it by taking upon himself its curse in order that he might effect our redemption. 4. The circumcision of Christ was a part of his humiliation and ransom for our sins.

TWENTY-EIGHTH LORD'S DAY.

OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Question 75. How art thou admonished and assured in the Lord's supper, that thou art a partaker of that one sacrifice of Christ, accomplished on the cross, and of all his benefits?

Answer. Thus, that Christ has commanded me, and all believers, to eat of this broken bread, and to drink of this cup, in remembrance of him; adding these promises, first, that his body was offered and broken on the cross for me, and his blood shed for me, as certainly as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me, and the cup communicated to me: and further, that he feeds and nourishes my soul to everlasting life, with his crucified body and shed blood, as assuredly as I receive from the hands of the minister and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, as certain signs of the body and blood of Christ.

EXPOSITION.

The questions which claim our special attention in treating the Lord's supper, are these:

I. *What is the Lord's supper?*
II. *What is the design of it?*
III. *In what does it differ from baptism?*
IV. *What is the meaning of the words of the institution?*
V. *What difference is there between the Lord's supper, and the Popish mass, and why the mass is to be abolished?*
VI. *In what does the lawful use of the Lord's supper consist?*
VII. *What do the ungodly receive in the use of the Lord's Supper?*
VIII. *For whom was it instituted?*
IX. *Who are to be admitted to this Supper?*

The first three of the above propositions belong to the 75th and 76th Questions of the Catechism; the fourth belongs to the 80th; the sixth, seventh, and eighth belong to the 81st; and the ninth to the 82nd, and will be treated in order under each of these questions.

I. What is the Lord's Supper?

In considering this question, we shall first notice the different names which are applied to this sacrament, and then in a few words define what it is. It is called *the Lord's Supper*, from the circumstance of its first institution, which took place when Christ and his disciples were at supper, which circumstance of time the church in the exercise of her right and liberty has changed: for it was merely on account of the eating of the paschal Lamb, which the law required to be celebrated at night, and which was to be abolished by this new sacrament, that it was instituted in the evening at the time of supper, rather than in the morning, or at noon. Paul calls it *the Lord's table.* It is also called *a covenant or assembly*, from the fact that in the celebration of this supper there must be some, whether few or many, that meet together for this purpose. At the time of its institution the disciples were present, to

whom it was said, "take this and divide it among yourselves," (Luke 22: 17.) From this it is evident that there must have been a number present, which is confirmed by what the Apostle says when repeating the words of the institution: "When ye come together in one place this is not to eat the Lord's supper;" and adds still further, "wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another." (1 Cor 11: 20, 23.) And that a number of persons are necessary for the purpose of celebrating this supper may be shown from the design of it, which is that it may be a sign, and bond of love; "for we being many are one bread, and one body." (1 Cor. 10: 17.) It is, again, called the *Eucharist*, because it is a ceremony of thanksgiving. It is often called by the fathers a *sacrifice;* not, however, a propitiatory, or meritorious sacrifice, as the Papists imagine; but a sacrifice of thanksgiving; because it is a solemn commemoration, and celebration of the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ. In the course of time it was called *mass* (missa) from the offering which was given by the rich for the benefit of the poor, or from the dismission of the assembly after the sermon which preceded the celebration of the supper, of which we shall hereafter speak more fully. We shall retain the name which the scriptures apply to it, and call it *the Lord's supper*. This brings us to the definition which the Catechism gives in answer to the above question, where it is said: *The Lord's supper was instituted by Christ, who has commanded me and all believers to eat of this broken bread and to drink of this cup in remembrance of him, adding these promises, first, that his body was offered and broken on the cross for me, and his blood shed for me, as certainly as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me, and the cup communicated to me; and further, that he feeds and nourishes my soul to everlasting life, with his crucified body and shed blood, as assuredly as I receive from the hands of the minister, and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, as certain signs of the body and blood of Christ.* Or, we may define it more briefly thus: The Lord's supper is the breaking and eating of bread, and drinking of wine according to the command of Christ, given to all believers, that he may by these signs declare that his body was broken, and his blood shed for them; that he gives them these things to eat and drink that they may be fed unto everlasting life; and that he will dwell in them and so nourish and quicken them for ever.

This sacrament, therefore, consists in the rite and the promise annexed to it, or in the signs and things signified. *The rite, or signs* are the bread which is broken and eaten, and the wine which is poured out, and drunk. *The things signified* are the broken body, and shed blood of Christ, which are eaten and drunk, or our union with Christ by faith, by which we are made partakers of Christ and all his benefits, so that we derive from him everlasting life, as the branches draw their life from the vine. We are assured of this our union and communion with Christ by the analogy which there is between the sign and the thing signified: and also by the promise which is joined to the sign. This analogy declares, and exhibits in a particular manner the sacrifice of Christ, and our communion with him; because the bread is not only broken, but also given unto us to be eaten. The *breaking* of the bread is a part of the ceremony, because a part of that which is signified, viz: the breaking of the body of Christ answers to it, of which Paul speaks, when he says: "This is my body which is broken for you." (1 Cor. 11: 24.) So the wine is seperated from the bread to

signify the violence of his death, when his blood was spilt and separated from his body.

II. What is the design of the Lord's Supper?

The Lord's supper was instituted:

1. That it might be a confirmation of our faith, or a most sure proof of our union, and communion with Christ, who feeds us with his body and blood unto everlasting life, as truly as we receive these signs from the hands of the minister. This object is attained by all those who receive these signs in true faith: for we so receive these signs from the hands of the minister, as if the Lord himself gave them unto us with his own hand. It is in this way that Christ is said to have baptized more disciples than John, when he, nevertheless, did it through his disciples. (John 4: 1.)

2. That we may by the observance of it make a public confession of our faith, acknowledge our gratitude, and bind ourselves to constant thankfulness, and to the celebration of this benefit. Hence it is said: "This do in remembrance of me." "For as often as ye eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (Luke 22: 19. 1 Cor. 11: 26.) This remembrance, or commemoration of Christ precedes and is taken for faith in the heart; after which we make public confession, and acknowledgements of our thankfulness.

3. That it might be a public distinction, or badge, by which the true church may be known, and recognized from the world. The Lord has instituted this supper for none, but those who are his disciples.

4. That it might be a bond of love, declaring that all who partake of it aright, are made members of one body whose head is Christ. "For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1 Cor. 10: 17.) Those now who are members of the same body have a mutual love one for another.

5. That the people of God who assemble in a public manner might be united together in the closest fellowship; for it was instituted to be observed in the congregation, whether there be many or few present. Hence Christ says, "Drink ye all of it," and Paul says, "When ye come together to eat tarry one for another." (Matt. 26: 27. 1 Cor. 11: 33.)

That the Lord's supper ought not to be celebrated privately, by one person alone may be proven; 1. Because it is a communion, and is the sign of our communion with Christ: but a private supper is no communion. 2. Because it is a solemn thanksgiving; and we ought all to render thanks unto God. Hence he who regards himself as unworthy to communicate with others, declares that he is not fit to give thanks unto God. 3. Because Christ, with all his benefits, is not the property of one, but belongs to all in common. A private communion would, however, make a private good out of that which is common. 4. Because Christ admitted all his disciples, yea even Judas, from which it is easy to see that a private communion is contrary to the appointment of Christ. 5. That some neglect the communion or defer it even until death, arises no doubt from some wrong notion, or influence, either because they will not commune with others, or because they think that they are not worthy. But all who believe that they are delivered from eternal condemnation by the death of Christ, and desire to advance in holiness, are worthy. Briefly, when the

Lord's supper is observed by one person alone it is done contrary to the design, name, institution, and nature of the sacrament.

Obj. But Christ makes the chief design of this supper consist in his remembrance. Therefore the confirmation of our faith is not the chief design of it. Ans. This consequence is not legitimate; for the remembrance of Christ comprises the confirmation of our faith, and the expression of our thankfulness as separate parts. It is, therefore, such an inference as if one would say, Peter is a man; therefore he does not possess a body. It is more correct, therefore, to conclude thus: Because *remembrance* of Christ is the supper; therefore it is the confirmation of our faith; for if Christ appointed this sacrament in remembrance of himself, he also designs the confirmation of our faith, since faith is nothing else than a faithful remembrance of Christ and his benefits. But some one may be ready to reply, It is the Holy Ghost that confirms our faith; therefore not the Lord's supper. But this again is no just conclusion; for it is the same as if any one were to say, It is God that feeds and supports us; therefore bread does not nourish us. The Holy Ghost does, indeed, confirm our faith, but it is through the word, and the sacraments, as God feeds and nourishes us, through the use of bread.

III. In what does the Lord's Supper differ from Baptism?

Although baptism, and the Lord's supper impart and seal unto us the same blessings, such as our spiritual ingrafting into Christ, communion with him, and the whole benefit of our salvation, of which the apostle speaks, when he says: "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit;" (1 Cor. 12: 13) yet they, nevertheless, manifestly differ in various respects. They differ, 1. In outward rites. 2. In the signification of these rites. For although the washing away of sin by the blood of Christ, by baptism, and the eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's supper, signify the same participation of Christ; yet the former is signified by plunging the body into the water of baptism, whilst the latter is exhibited, and sealed unto us in the supper by the eating of bread, and the drinking of wine. Hence whilst the sacraments agree, as to the things which they signify, they, nevertheless, differ as to the manner in which these things are expressed. 3. They differ as to the design peculiar to each. Baptism is the sign of the covenant between God and the faithful; the Lord's supper is the sign of the preservation of the same covenant: or, baptism is the sign of our regeneration, and connection with the church and covenant of God; the Lord's supper is the sign of the nourishment and preservation of those who have already entered into the church. It is necessary that the Spirit should first renew us, of which renewal baptism is the sign; then after we are renewed it is further necessary that we should be nourished by the body and blood of Christ, the sign of which is the Lord's supper. Or to express it more briefly, God assures us by baptism of our reception into the church, and confirms us in regard to the preservation and increase of his gifts by the use of the Lord's supper. Yet Christ, who regenerates and nourishes us unto everlasting life is one and the same. 4. They differ as to the manner of their observance. Baptism merely requires regeneration, and is applied unto all those whom the church regards as regenerated, including

adults who make a profession of repentance and faith, and infants born in the church; whilst the Lord's supper requires that those who receive it examine their faith, commemorate the Lord's death, and express their thankfulness. "This do in remembrance of me." "Ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." "Let a man examine himself." (Luke 22: 19. 1 Cor. 11: 26, 28.) All, therefore, who belong to the church, infants as well as adults, are to be baptized; whilst none but such as are capable of examining themselves and shewing the Lord's death are to be admitted to the supper. 5. They differ in the order of their observance. Baptism precedes the Lord's supper, which ought not to be administered to any, except such as have been baptized, and that, not until they have made a profession of their repentance and faith. Hence in the ancient church, after the sermon, and just before the administration of the supper, they dismissed those who were excommunicated; likewise such as were possessed with an evil spirit, and those who were learning the first rudiments of the Christian faith, who were either not yet baptized, or had been baptized in their infancy, but did not sufficiently understand the principles of religion. So it was also in the Jewish Church, in relation to those who were uncircumcised. If those now who were baptized, were not admitted to the supper before they made a profession of their faith, much less are they to be admitted, who, although they are baptized, lead offensive and wicked lives. 6. The Lord's supper is to be observed frequently, because it is proper for us often to commemorate his death. It was instituted to be a public commemoration, and showing of his death. It is also necessary for us frequently to have our faith confirmed in regard to the perpetuity of the covenant. The Lord's supper is, therefore, to be often repeated, as in the case of the paschal Lamb. Baptism, however, is not to be repeated, because there is no command requiring it, and because it is the sign of our reception in the church and covenant of God. The covenant once entered into is not again made void in the case of those who repent, but remains unchangeable. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. There is, therefore, no new covenant made, not even in the case of those who fall, and renew their repentance. There is merely a renewal of the first covenant. Hence it is said: "This do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11: 25, 26.) Of baptism it is said: "As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Rom. 6: 3. Mark 16: 16.)

Question 76. What is it then to eat the crucified body, and drink the shed blood of Christ?

Answer. It is not only to embrace with a believing heart, all the sufferings and death of Christ, and thereby to obtain the pardon of sin and life eternal; but also, besides that, to become more and more united to his sacred body, by the Holy Ghost, who dwells both in Christ and in us; so that we, although Christ is in heaven, and we on earth, are, notwithstanding, "flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone;" and that we live and are governed for ever by one Spirit, as members of the same body are by one soul.

EXPOSITION.

This Question has respect to the thing which is signified by the Lord's supper. The eating of the body, and the drinking of the blood of Christ is not corporal, but spiritual, and embraces, 1. Faith in his sufferings and death. 2. The forgiveness of sins, and the gift of eternal life through faith. 3. Our union with Christ through the Holy Spirit, who dwells both in Christ and in us. 4. The quickening influence of the same Spirit. Hence to eat the crucified body and to drink the shed blood of Christ is to believe that God receives us into his favor for the sake of Christ's merits, that we obtain the remission of our sins, and reconciliation with God by the same faith, and that the Son of God, who having assumed our nature united it personally with himself, dwells in us, and joins us to himself, and the nature which he assumed, by granting unto us his Spirit; through whom he regenerates us, and restores in us light, righteousness, and eternal life such as belongs to the nature which he took upon himself. Or to express it more briefly, it is to believe—to obtain the remission of sins by faith—to be united with Christ, and to become partakers of his life, or to be made like unto Christ by the Holy Spirit who works the same things both in Christ and in us.

This eating is that communion which we have with Christ, of which the Scriptures speak, and of which we make confession in the Creed, which consists in a spiritual union with Christ, as members with the head, and branches with the vine. Christ teaches this eating of his flesh in the sixth chapter of John, and confirms it in the supper by external signs. It is in this sense that the ancient fathers, such as Augustin, Eusebius, Nazianzen, Hilary and others, explain the eating of Christ's flesh as we shall hereafter show. It is plain, therefore, that neither the doctrine of transubstantiation which the Papists advocate, nor a corporal presence of Christ, and the eating of his body in the bread with the mouth, which many defend, can be established from the language which is employed in reference to the supper, which promises the eating of Christ's body.

Question 77. Where has Christ promised, that he will as certainly feed and nourish believers with his body and blood, as they eat of this broken bread, and drink of this cup?

Answer. In the institution of the supper, which is thus expressed: "The Lord Jesus, in the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me: After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death until he come."

This promise is repeated by the holy Apostle Paul, where he says, "the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? for we, being many, are one bread and one body; because we are all partakers of that one bread.

EXPOSITION.

The institution of the Lord's supper establishes the true and saving communion of the body and blood of Christ. We must, therefore, diligently enquire after the true meaning of the words of the institution. Matthew, Mark and Luke, give a particular account of the institution of the Lord's supper, which we have repeated by the apostle Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians. We shall here repeat the account which each one gives of the institution of the supper.

Matthew 26: 26, &c.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Mark 14: 22, &c.

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many."

Luke 22: 19, &c.

"And took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them saying: This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed for you."

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1 Cor. 11: 23, &c.

"For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you; that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks he brake it, and said: Take eat, this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying: This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."

We shall now give a short exposition of the words of the Apostle Paul, as just quoted, and then present our views upon this most important subject.

The Lord Jesus: He is the author of this supper. It is for this reason called the Lord's supper. We must, therefore, inquire what the Lord did, said, and commanded, as Cyprian appropriately admonishes us, when he says: "*If Christ alone is to be heard, we must not regard what any one before us has thought proper to be done; but what Christ, who is before all, has first done.*"

The same night in which he was betrayed: This circumstance is added to teach us that Christ instituted his supper at the last celebration of the Passover that he might show, 1. That there was now an end to all the ancient sacrifices, and that he substituted a new sacrament, which should henceforth be observed, the Passover being now abolished; and that it signified the same thing which that did in the place of which it was substituted, with the exception of the difference of time. The Paschal Lamb signified that Christ would come, and offer himself a sacrifice. The Lord's supper teaches that this is already accomplished. 2. That he might excite his disciples, and us to a more attentive consideration of the cause on account of which he instituted this supper, and that he might also show how solemnly he would commend it to our regard, in as much as he would not do any thing just before his death, except that which was of the greatest importance. Christ instituted it then at the time of his death that it might be, as it were, the testament, or last will of our testator. In a word: Paul adds this circumstance that we may know, that Christ instituted this supper as a memorial of himself now ready to die.

He took bread: The bread which Christ took was unleavened bread, such as they ate at the feast of the Passover. This circumstance, however, does not properly belong to the Supper, any more than the evening at which time it was instituted; for the use of unleavened bread at the institution was accidental. Hence we must not infer from this that there is any necessity for the use of such bread in the celebration of the Supper, or that Christ would lay down any particular way of baking, or using it. Yet still the bread which is used in the celebration of the Lord's supper differs from common bread, for whilst the latter is eaten for the nourishment of the body, the former is received for the nourishment of the soul, or for the confirmation of our faith, and union with Christ. It is here to be observed too, that Christ is said to have taken bread from the table, that is, with his hand. Hence he did not take his body; nor did he take his body with, in, or under the bread, except in a sacramental sense: for his body did not lie upon, but sat at the table.

When he had given thanks: Matthew and Mark say of the bread, *when he had blessed it;* and of the cup, *when he had given thanks.* Luke and Paul say of the bread, *when he had given thanks.* Hence to bless, and give thanks signify in this place the same thing, so that the mystery of the magical consecration of the Papists, cannot be found in the difference of the language here used. Christ blessed, that is, gave thanks to his Father, and not to the bread, for spiritual blessings; because his work on earth was now finished, with the exception of the last act, which was just at hand, and because it pleased the Father to redeem the world by the death of his Son: or he gave thanks because the typical Passover was abolished, and that which was true, and signified was now exhibited, and that the Church had a memorial of him; or he may have given thanks for the wonderful gathering and preservation of the church.

He brake it: He broke the bread which he took from the table, and distributed the one bread among many, and not some invisible thing which was concealed in the bread. He did not break his body, but the bread. Hence Paul says, "The bread which we break." (1 Cor. 10: 16.) He distributed the one bread among many: because we being many are one body. Christ then broke the bread not merely for the purpose of distributing it, but also to signify thereby, 1. The greatness of his sufferings, and the separation of his soul from his body. 2. The communion of many with his own body, and the bond of their union, and mutual love. "The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ; for we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." (1 Cor. 10: 16.) The breaking of the bread is, therefore, a necessary ceremony both on account of its signification, and for the confirmation of our faith, and is to be retained in the celebration of the Supper: 1. Because of the command of Christ, *Do this.* 2. Because of the authority and example of the church in the times of the Apostles, which in view of this circumstance, termed the whole transaction, *the breaking of bread.* 3. For our comfort, that we may know that the body of Christ was broken for us, as certainly as we see the bread broken. 4. That the doctrine of transubstantiation and consubstantiation may be rejected, and abandoned.

Take, eat: This command was addressed to the disciples and the whole church of the New Testament, from which it appears, 1. That the Popish mass, in which the Priest gives nothing to be received, and eaten by the church, is not the Lord's supper, but a private supper to him that sacrifices, and a mere theatrical performance. 2. That we ought not to be idle spectators of the supper, but ought to receive, and eat it. 3. That the Lord's supper ought not to be celebrated, except where there are those to receive and partake of it. 4. That it is a sign of grace on the part of God, who exhibits unto us certain benefits which we are to receive by faith, as we take the signs with our hand and mouth.

This is my body: *This*, that is, this bread: as if he would say, *this thing* which I have in my hand, which was bread. That this is the proper interpretation is evident from the following considerations: 1. Christ took nothing but bread: he broke bread: and gave the broken bread to the disciples. 2. Paul says expressly, "The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" 3. It is said of the wine: "This cup is the New Testament in my blood." It is in the same way that it is here said, *This*, meaning this bread, *is my body which is broken* for you, and delivered unto death. The literal sense, if we understand the words properly, is this: The substance of this bread is the substance of my body. But to understand the words in this sense would be absurd; for bread is something destitute of life, which is baked of grain, and not personally united with the Word; but the body of Christ is a living substance, born of the virgin Mary, and personally united with the Word. Christ, then, calls the bread his body, meaning thereby, that it is the sign of his body, attributing by a figure of speech, the name of the thing signified to the sign; because he appoints this bread as the sign, and sacrament of his body, as Augustin interprets it when he says: "*The Lord did not hesitate to say, This is my body, when he gave the sign of his body.*" Be it far from us, therefore, that we should say that Christ took bread visibly, and his body invisibly in the bread; for he did not say, In this bread is my body; or,

This bread is my body invisibly; but, This bread is my body, true, and visible which is offered for you.

These, moreover, are the words of the promise added to this sacrament, for the purpose of teaching us that the bread in this use is the body of Christ, which is exhibited and given to those who partake of it and believe in this promise; or, it is the flesh of Christ which he promised that he would give for the life of the world. For this is the same promise which Christ had made before in the sixth chapter of John, where he says that his flesh shall quicken us, and that it shall contribute to the salvation of those who eat of it. Here he merely adds the sacramental rite, which clothes and seals the promise, as if he would say: I have promised in the gospel eternal life to all that eat my flesh and drink my blood; now I confirm and seal with this external rite the promise which I have made, that henceforth all that believe this promise and eat this bread may be fully persuaded and assured that they do truly eat my flesh, which is given for the life of the world, and that they have eternal life.

By this promise the bread is made the sacrament of Christ's body, and his body is made the thing signified by this sacrament; and these two, the sign and thing signified, are joined in the sacrament, not by any physical union, nor by any corporal or local existence of the one in the other, much less by a transubstantiation or change of the one into the other; but by a *sacramental union* whose bond is this promise which is added to the bread, requiring faith of those who use it, which union declares, seals and exhibits the things signified by the signs. From this it appears that these things in their lawful use are always exhibited and received conjointly, but not without faith, viewing and apprehending the thing promised and now present in the sacrament; yet not present or included in the sign, as in a vessel, but present in the promise which is the better part, being the soul of the sacrament. For they want judgment who say that the body of Christ cannot be present in the sacrament unless it be in or under the bread, as if the bread alone without the promise were the sacrament, or the principal part of it.

Which for you: For my disciples; that is, for your salvation and that of the whole church.

Is broken: But the body of Christ, some one may say, was not broken, nor is it now broken. To this we reply, that the Apostle in this passage has respect to the signification of the breaking of the bread, which denotes the rending of Christ's body. For, as the bread is broken in pieces, so the body and soul of Christ were torn from each other upon the cross. The property of the sign is, therefore, by a sacramental metonymy, attributed to the thing signified.

This do: This is a command for the observance of this sacrament. *This* which you see me do, do ye also hereafter in my church; when congregated take bread, give thanks, break, distribute, eat, &c. He comprehends and gives command in reference to the whole transaction; and that to us who believe, and not to the Jews who were about to crucify him.

In remembrance of me: That is, meditating upon my benefits which I have bestowed upon you, and which this sacrament calls to your remembrance; feeling also in your hearts that I give you these my gifts, and celebrating them by public confession in the sight of God, angels and men, and so giving thanks for them. The design of the Lord's supper is, there-

fore, a remembrance of Christ, which does not consist merely in meditating upon his history, but is a remembrance of his death and benefits, including faith by which we appropriate to ourselves Christ and his merits, and gratitude or a public confession of the benefits of Christ. The parts of this remembrance, which is as it were the whole supper, are faith and gratitude, from which it appears that it was instituted to be a memorial of Christ, calling to our recollection what, and how great benefits he hath purchased for us, and with what, and how great sufferings he has obtained them, confirming in us at the same time the faith by which we receive these gifts. It does not, therefore, follow, that because Christ has instituted the supper to his remembrance, that it is not for the confirmation of our faith, any more than if I were to say, the supper does not confirm our faith, because the Holy Ghost does. It is no proper consequence to infer the denial of an instrumental cause from the fact, that we give prominence to the chief cause, no more than the denial of a part follows from a statement of the whole of which it is a part. Remembrance of Christ comprehends the remembrance of his benefits, together with faith and the giving of thanks; for Christ by the use of these signs admonishes us of himself and of his benefits, and stirs up and establishes our confidence in him, from which it naturally follows that we also publicly express our gratitude to him. Hence this supper ought not only to admonish us of our duty, as some will have it, but it should first remind us of Christ's benefit, and then of our duty; for where there is no benefit, there cannot be any gratitude.

Drink ye all of this: This command condemns the conduct of the Pope who refused the laity the cup, and is likewise opposed to the sophistical figment of the concomitance of the blood with the body of Christ under the form of bread. Christ commanded all to eat and to drink. The Pope, however, will not allow the wine to any but the priests, giving nothing more than the bread to the laity, affirming that they drink in eating the bread. This shameful conduct is condemned by this command of Christ: "Drink ye all of this." That the argument of the Pope in justification of his course is a mere sophism, when he affirms that this command had reference merely to the disciples who were present at the time, who were not laymen, but priests, is evident, 1. Because, by this argument they foolishly make the disciples mass-mumming priests. 2. Because, the Scriptures do not recognize the distinction which they make between the priests and laity. All the faithful are called priests in the Scriptures. "And hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father." "Ye are a royal priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (Rev. 1: 6. 1 Pet. 2: 9, 5.) 3. Because, by the same pretext the whole supper might be taken away from the laity, especially from females, if it were true that none are to be admitted to this sacrament but that class of persons present at its institution. *The figment of concomitance* is a wicked pretext, which Christ refutes when he calls the bread by itself, his body, and the cup by itself, his blood, and gave both separately to the disciples to be eaten and drunk, and commanded them henceforth to administer them in the same way.

This cup is the New Testament: Or, the covenant according to the Greek word διαθηκη, which corresponds with the Hebrew *Berith*. It is called the *new* covenant, which means the renewed, or fulfilled covenant. The new covenant consists in our reconciliation with God, and communion

with Christ and all his benefits by faith in his sacrifice already offered, without the observance of the ceremonies of the old Passover. *The supper* is called the new covenant with reference to its signification, because it is the sign and seal of this covenant, sealing unto us our reconciliation with God, and our union with Christ by faith. Christ in calling the supper the new covenant, comprehends both the promise and the condition expressed in the promise, which is repentance and faith on our part; from which it follows that it was also instituted to bind us to a Christian life. The new covenant is here also opposed to the old, which was the Passover with its rites. The supper signifies Christ already offered; the Passover signified Christ who should be offered. Both, however, signify our union with Christ. From what has now been said, we may infer that the drinking of the blood of Christ is not corporal; for the New Testament is only one, and includes also all the people of God who lived before the coming of Christ into the world.

In my blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins: The blood of Christ is his death. Hence in his blood, is the same thing as in, or on account of his death. The shedding of the blood of Christ is his merit, in view of which we receive the forgiveness of sin, when it is apprehended by faith.

As often as ye eat this bread: The supper is, therefore, to be frequently celebrated, which we may also establish from its design, which is to celebrate the Lord's death.

Ye do shew the Lord's death: Believe that Christ died, and that for you; then profess his death publicly before all.

Until he come: This supper is, therefore, to be perpetuated unto the end of the world, nor is any other external form of worship to be expected.

The words of the institution, which we have now explained, may be more fully illustrated by the words of the Apostle: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. 10: 16.)

The cup of blessing: It is called the cup of blessing, or thanksgiving, because it is received for this end, that we may call to mind the benefits of Christ, and so render thanks to him for his sufferings and death.

The communion of the blood of Christ: Communion is a participation in the thing which is common. The communion of the body and blood of Christ is, therefore, to be made through faith partakers of Christ and all his benefits, by the same Spirit dwelling both in Christ, and in us, and effecting the same things in us which he does in Christ: or, it is the spiritual fellowship which the faithful have with Christ, as members with the head, and as branches with the vine. The bread and wine are the communion, that is, they are the sign and testimony of our communion with Christ. This communion, as the Apostle briefly expresses it, consists in this, that we being many are one body; from which it is easy to see that this our communion with Christ is no corporal eating; for it is effected only by faith and the Holy Ghost. Christ is the head, and we are the members; all who are members have communion in all the benefits of Christ. The head and benefits are both common: hence we are all members in common and so have mutual love one to another.

TWENTY-NINTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 78. Do then the bread and wine become the very body and blood of Christ?

Answer. Not at all; but as the water in baptism is not changed into the blood of Christ, neither is the washing away of sin itself, being only the sign and confirmation thereof appointed of God; so the bread of the Lord's supper is not changed into the very body of Christ, though, agreeably to the nature and properties of sacraments, it is called the body of Christ Jesus.

EXPOSITION.

The Catechism, in the answer to this Question, rejects the doctrine of transubstantiation advocated by the Papists, and also the doctrine of consubstantiation defended by the Ubiquitarians and others, and explains the language which is here used together with the true sense of the words of Christ, *This is my body.* In our exposition of this question we shall consider, in the first place, the form of speech here used, and the true sense of the words of Christ, and then notice the controversies in regard to this subject. And here we must refer to this sacrament, what was said when speaking of sacramental phrases in general. It is in this way that Augustin makes an application of the general rule of sacramental phrases to the particular instance of eating the flesh of Christ when he says, "*The only way by which we can determine whether a Scriptural phrase is to be taken in a proper, or figurative sense, is to see if it can properly be referred to some moral duty, or be made to harmonise with the true faith, and if this cannot be done, then we may know that it is spoken figuratively.*" And then a little further on he produces this example: "*Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood ye have no life in you. Here Christ seems to enjoin a shameful crime. Hence it must be understood figuratively, as teaching us, that we must partake of the passion of our Lord, and joyfully and profitably call to mind, that his flesh was wounded and pierced for us.*" As the Scriptures sometimes speak of baptism properly, and at other times figuratively, as we demonstrated when speaking of baptism, so they speak in like manner of the Lord's supper. It is, for instance, a figurative mode of speech when Christ says, of the bread, *This is my body;* and of the cup, *This is my blood:* and when Paul says, *This cup is the New Testament in my blood.* For in all these instances the name of the thing signified is attributed to the sign by a sacramental metonymy. It is in the same way that we must understand Paul, when he says, *This is my body which is broken for you*, because he attributes the property of the sign (which is to be broken) to the thing signified. It is in the same way that Cyprian says: "*When we drink of the cup we hang to the cross, we suck the blood, and place our tongues in the very wounds of our Redeemer.*" It is in the same way that we must understand Chrysostom, when he says: "*The blood of Christ is in the cup; the body of Christ which is in heaven is placed on earth to our view; nor is it only seen; but it is touched; nor is it only touched, but eaten; it is held, and eaten by us, as a token of love, as we sometimes fondle those whom we love,*" &c. These declarations are all to be understood as spoken figuratively of the body of Christ.

These are proper forms of speech, when Christ says, *This do in remembrance of me:* and when the Fathers every where in their writings say, *The breaking of the bread is a memorial of the sacrifice of Christ: The bread signifies the body of Christ: It is a figure, a sign, a sacrament of the body of Christ.*

Of the controversy respecting the words of the institution of the holy supper.

Since our adversaries, the Papists, and others, deny that Christ speaks sacramentally in the words of the institution, and contend that his words are to be literally understood, we must here say something in regard to this controversy. The Papists imagine that by virtue of the consecration the bread is changed, or converted into the body of Christ, the accidents only remaining. This change they call transubstantiation. There are others again, who contend that there is a consubstantiation, or co-existence of the body of Christ *in*, or *with* the bread. These two classes of persons equally boast, that they understand the words of Christ in their natural sense, which, however, is far from being true; for the true simplicity and property of words is that to which, for a proper understanding and interpretation, nothing is added, taken away, or changed. But those who believe that the body of Christ is *with*, *in*, and *under* the bread, add to the words of Christ and so depart from their true simplicity; for if we are to retain simply what Christ said, and if that is not to be admitted which he did not say, then we cannot say, *The bread is bread and the body of Christ at the same time;* but simply, *The bread is the body of Christ.* For Christ did not say my body is *in*, or *with*, or *under* the bread; or the bread is bread, and my body at the same time; nor did he add, (as these persons do) really, substantially, corporally; but these were all the words he uttered, *This is my body.* Neither can the advocates of the doctrine of transubstantiation prove that they interpret the words of Christ in their natural sense, when they say that the bread is changed into the body of Christ; for this is an invention of their own. Christ does not say the bread was already made, or being made, or would be made his body; but he merely said, the bread is my body, from which it is plain that no change can be admitted if the words of Christ are understood in their literal sense. Hence it is with little success that these persons endeavor to make it appear that they interpret the words of Christ in their literal sense, when they in so many respects, and so manifestly, depart from them.

We, however, retain the words of Christ simply without any addition, or change, affirming that the bread is the body of Christ, the true and visible body which was offered for us upon the cross. But as these words when understood in their literal signification, teach what is repugnant to the true christian faith, (for if the bread were the body of Christ in a proper sense, it would follow that it was crucified for us) we must interpret them sacramentally, which is to say, that the bread is called the body of Christ, because it is the sign of his body, and that the cup, or the wine in the cup is called the blood of Christ, because it is the sign of the blood of Christ. The cup is likewise called the New Testament, because it is the sign of the New Testament, as baptism is called "the washing away of sin," and "the washing of regeneration," because it is the sign of both these things which

are effected by the blood and Spirit of Christ. The true sense and interpretation then of the words of Christ, *This is my body, which is given for you*, is, this bread which I break and give unto you is the sign of my body, which was delivered unto death for you, and is a certain seal of your union with me, so that whosoever shall believe and eat this bread, does, in a certain sense, really and truly eat my body. The name of the thing signified is, therefore, attributed to the sign by a sacramental metonymy, and that both on account of the analogy which there is between the sign and thing signified, and also on account of the connection which the thing signified has with the sign in its proper use.

In this interpretation which we have now given of the words of Christ, we have not been deceived and led astray by philosophy, and human reason, as our adversaries basely misrepresent us; but we have been governed by those rules according to which, by the consent of all wise men, we are to judge of the correctness of the interpretation of any portion of Scripture, viz: according to the analogy or rule of faith; according to the nature of the subject or thing, and according to the testimony of Scripture which establishes the same thing. It is by the help of these three rules that the true sense of Scripture is generally determined, whenever there is any necessity to depart from the letter, to the sense of any particular portion of divine truth. 1. That no interpretation is to be received which does not agree with the rule of faith, or which is opposed to any particular article of faith, or to any command of the Decalogue, or to any express declaration of Scripture, is evident from this, that the Spirit of truth does not contradict itself. 2. That we may know if the sense, or meaning conveyed by any words corresponds with the nature of the subject spoken of, when there is any controversy, as to the true meaning, we must see, as here concerning the supper, which is a sacrament, how the Scriptures in other places speak of the sacraments, and particularly of the supper. 3. And lastly, other parallel passages of Scripture must be considered, which either plainly and confessedly teach the same thing, or from which we may prove, in other words, that the same doctrine is taught concerning the same thing, as that which is comprehended in the passage under controversy: for if we can arrive at the true meaning of any other clearer and uncontroverted passage of divine truth, we may also be fully persuaded of the sense of the one about which there is a dispute, if both teach the same thing. Hence it is evident, that that interpretation of the words of Christ in reference to the institution of the Supper, which agrees with these rules must be true, whilst those which differ from them are false. Now the interpretation which we have given of these words, which indeed is not ours, but the interpretation of Christ himself, of the apostle Paul, and of all the orthodox Fathers, agrees in every respect with these rules. There can, therefore, be no doubt of its correctness and agreement with the truth of the gospel. We shall now proceed to the arguments by which we prove that the interpretation, which we have given of the words of Christ is true. These arguments consist of four kinds.

I. There are some which we deduce from the text itself, and from the circumstances connected with the institution of the Lord's supper.

II. There are others which we gather from the nature of the thing or subject by understanding the words in a sense corresponding with the thing

itself, or which is the same thing as to understand them according to the nature of all sacraments.

III. There are others again which we infer from the analogy of the articles of our faith, or from a comparison of the different parts of christian doctrine.

IV. And lastly, there are others which we derive from parallel passages of Scripture, which teach the same things with such plainness as to leave no room for controversy.

I. The arguments deduced from the words, and circumstances connected with the institution of the Lord's Supper.

1. The human nature of Christ at the first celebration of the Supper sat at the table in its own proper place, and is now in heaven. Hence it was not then, nor is it now corporally at the same time in the bread, or in the place of the bread.

2. Christ did not at the first Supper take into his hand, nor break his body, but the bread. Hence the bread is not properly, and in reality the very body of Christ.

3. The body of Christ was born of the Virgin; bread is made out of meal. It is not, therefore, really the body of Christ.

4. Christ said of the visible bread, which was broken, *This is my body;* and of the visible cup, which he gave to the disciples, *This cup is the New Testament in my blood.* Hence the Papists do not hold fast to the letter, when they thus transpose the words of Christ, *My body is contained under the form of bread and wine;* nor do the Ubiquitarians when they say, *My body is in, with, and under this bread;* much less when they both say, *My invisible body, which is contained under this form, or under this bread, is my body.* For both of them do not only manifestly depart from the letter to a gloss of their own, but they also wickedly pervert the words of Christ in the very first gloss which they make, as if it were written, *My body is under this*, and in the latter they make Christ utter a foolish tautology, as if he had said, *My body is my body.*

5. The body of Christ which we eat in the supper was delivered to death, and crucified for us. This, however, cannot be said of the bread. Hence it is not properly, nor in reality the body of Christ.

6. The cup is the New Testament, in the same way in which the bread is the body of Christ. But the cup is the New Testament sacramentally, as we have already shown, and as we may still further prove by this argument: The New Testament is not properly drunk with the mouth, but believed with the heart. But the cup is drunk with the mouth. Therefore, it cannot properly be the New Testament. It is now in the same sense that the bread is the body of Christ, viz: in a sacramental sense.

7. If the bread is properly the body, and the cup the blood of Christ, it must follow, that in the first supper the blood was separated from the body of Christ, and then they are both exhibited to us separately, as they are separate signs. But neither was the blood in the first supper without the body, nor is the body of Christ now given to us without the blood; for then at the first supper Christ was not yet dead, nor does he now die any more. The bread is, therefore, the body, and the cup the blood of Christ, not properly, but sacramentally.

8. That which Christ himself ate and drank, was not properly his body and blood, or else he must have eaten and drunk himself. But he ate of that bread, and drank of that cup: "I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine." (Mark 14: 25.) Chrysostom says: "*Christ also drank of the wine, lest his disciples when hearing these words should say, What, shall we then drink his blood, and eat his flesh? and so be troubled? For when he first made mention of this kind of eating and drinking, many became offended at his words. Hence, in order that this might not now occur, he himself first ate and drank, that he might thus lead them with a calm mind to the communion of these mysteries.*" Hence, the bread and cup are not properly, but sacramentally the body and blood of Christ.

9. Remembrance is not of things bodily present, but absent. Christ instituted this sacrament to his remembrance. Therefore, he is not corporally present in the bread, or in the sacrament.

10. Christ with his body is either not substantially in the bread, nor under the form of bread; or the supper is no longer to be celebrated. For the Apostle commands us to eat of this bread and to drink of this cup, and to show the Lord's death till he come. The celebration of this supper is, then, evidently not to be dispensed with, but must continue to the end of the world. Christ has not, therefore, come as yet, neither is he bodily present in the bread, or under the form of bread.

11. Lastly, as the bread was the body of Christ in the first supper, and as the disciples did eat the body of Christ, so in the very same sense, and in no other, is the bread now the body of Christ, and it is in the very same way that we eat the body of Christ; for the supper which we celebrate, is the same which the disciples celebrated. But the bread in the first supper was not essentially the body of Christ, neither did the disciples eat with their mouths the body of Christ in, or under the form of bread; for Christ reclined at the table with his disciples in a corporal and visible manner, and did not undergo any change during the whole transaction. Therefore, the bread is not now the body of Christ, as to its essence, nor do we eat with our mouths the body of Christ in, or under the form of bread.

II. The arguments which are drawn from the nature of Sacraments.

1. The very form of speech which is used furnishes a strong argument in favor of the view which we have presented: The bread is the body of Christ. But bread is not in its own substance the body of Christ, (for it has been by reason of this, that the idea of transubstantiation and consubstantiation has been invented.) Therefore, the language is figurative and sacramental, being such as is common to the sacraments, and which we have explained when speaking of the institution of the supper.

2. In all sacraments, when the names or properties of the thing signified are attributed to the signs, it does not signify the corporal presence of the things in the signs, but a correspondence between the signs and things signified, and a sealing of the things by their signs, and a union of these two things in their lawful use. In this supper, now, Christ attributes the names of the things signified (his body and blood) to the signs (bread and wine) saying, *This is my body: This is my blood.* Hence, we must not understand these words as expressing any corporal presence.

3. The nature of all sacraments requires that the signs be taken corporally, whilst the things signified must be understood spiritually; and that the things which are visible are not the things signified, being only the signs and pledges of them. Hence, inasmuch as the supper is a sacrament, we must take the signs and things signified, in a sense corresponding with the nature of sacraments generally.

4. Sacramental phrases must be understood sacramentally. The words of the supper, *This is my body; This is my blood*, are sacramental phrases; for they attribute the names of the things signified to the signs which are used in this sacrament. They must, therefore, be understood sacramentally.

Obj. But the words of the supper do not contain any figure of speech. Therefore, they are not to be interpreted sacramentally, but literally. Ans. We deny the antecedent; for Christ himself annexes a sacramental phrase, saying, *Do this:* that is, eat this bread and drink this cup *in remembrance of me*, that ye may be admonished and assured that my body was given over to death, and my blood shed for you and given to you as the meat and drink of eternal life. The same thing may be said of this declaration of Christ, *This cup is the New Testament in my blood;* that is, it is the seal of the New Testament, or of the promises of grace now fulfilled by my blood.

5. That which the gospel does not promise, the supper cannot seal unto us: for the sacraments declare, exhibit, confirm and seal the same thing which the word promises. It is for this reason that the sacraments are called *visible promises, and visible words.* But the gospel no where promises any corporal or oral eating; yea, Christ in the gospel expressly condemns, and refutes it by these two arguments: 1. Because his body would in a short time be taken up into heaven, and so be far removed from the Jews to whom he spake. 2. Because the eating of his flesh in this way could be of no profit. Nor does Christ in the instance to which reference is here had, merely refer to a gross, carnal and oral manducation of his flesh, but he rejects in a positive way the eating of his flesh in every form, in which it may be done with the mouth. There is, therefore, no oral or corporal manducation to be conceived of in the supper, which is contrary to the gospel.

6. The figment of a corporal presence, and eating of the flesh of Christ under the bread, is wholly repugnant to the formal character of the sacraments. It is, therefore, to be rejected. That the antecedent is true, is evident from this, that it is neither the sign, nor the thing signified, of which two things every sacrament consists. It is not the sign, because it does not strike the senses, neither is there any thing included in it which it might signify; nor can it be said to be the things signified, because the Scriptures never speak of any change of the essence, nor of any real commingling of the flesh of Christ, with our bodies, neither can there be any, unless we embrace the reveries of the Eutychians, and Swenckfieldians; for the sacraments declare and seal unto us only such blessings as are contained in the promise of the gospel. Again, it is not the thing signified, because it is effected without faith, and is common both to the godly and the ungodly, whereas the things which are signified by the sacraments are received by faith alone, and by none but the godly. And still further, if it were the thing signified, no one ever had been, or would be saved without it; for all the sacraments signify the same things, which are also given to all those who are to be saved, because they are the benefits of the Messiah, compre-

hended in the promise of the gospel. These benefits are the same unto all; neither is any one saved without them. There is, therefore, no room left for a substantial presence, and oral manducation of the body of Christ in, or under the form of bread in the sacrament, and it is in fact nothing more than an empty name, and idol in the world.

Obj. This oral manducation is a sign of that which is spiritual, and is a great confirmation of our faith. Therefore, the body of Christ is also a sacrament, whilst the thing signified is invisible grace. Ans. The antecedent is false, because the flesh of Christ is invisible under the bread, and cannot, therefore, signify another thing which is invisible, or confirm our faith. Sacraments, or signs ought to be visible; hence that does not deserve to be called a sacrament, (as Erasmus says) which is not accomplished by an external sign: for the sacraments have been instituted for this end, that they may, as it were, effectually show to our external senses what the word promises, and the Holy Spirit works in our hearts, that they may be visible testimonies, and pledges of the promise of grace exhibited and applied. It is for this reason that Augustin says: "*A sacrament is a visible word.*" Again, "*It is a visible form, or sign of an invisible grace.*" Again, "*A sign is a thing which differs from the form which it presents to our senses, and produces in our thoughts something else.*" Again, "*the signs of divine things are indeed visible; but the things themselves are invisible.*" Hence also the definition of Prosper; "*The sacrifice of the church consists of two things, the visible form of the signs, and the invisible flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; in the sign, and the thing signified thereby, which is the body of Christ.*" There is, therefore, no invisible thing or action that brings to view the nature, or thing signified by the sacrament. Consequently those who affirm that the flesh of Christ is a sacrament *in*, *under*, or *with* the bread, must show unto us this visible and sensible eating in the Supper, if they do not wish to stand in opposition to the general voice of the church. Again, there must be an analogy between the sign, and the thing signified; for unless the sacraments (says Augustin,) have some correspondence with the things of which they are sacraments, they would be no sacraments. Now if the flesh of Christ be also a sacrament, and if the thing signified be invisible grace, what analogy and correspondence will there be between the two sacraments? There can evidently be none; from which it follows that the flesh of Christ cannot be called a sacrament, seeing it is not less the thing signified by the sacrament, than the salvation which is signified analogically by the bread, as by a sign. Hence the sacramental eating, which is effected by the mouth, does not, when considered in itself, extend to the body of Christ in any physical manner; because, by this eating, nothing more than the external signs are exhibited and received in their own nature. Augustin, inquiring how the bread is the body of Christ, and the wine his blood, says: "*These, brethren, are called sacraments; because one thing is seen in them, and another is understood. That which is seen has a material form; that which is understood a spiritual benefit,*" *&c.*

7. The communion which the word promises, and the sacraments seal, is not corporal, but spiritual. But the communion of Christ, which there is in the supper is the same which is promised in the word, and sealed in the other sacraments. Therefore, the communion which there is in the supper is not corporal, but spiritual. The first proposition is clear; because the

gospel teaches no other communion than that which is spiritual, which is effected by faith. The second proposition is also evident, because the promises of the gospel extend unto us the very same blessings which the sacraments exhibit, and promise; for the sacraments are a visible word, in as much as they promise the same thing which the word does by visible signs, and are seals of the promise of the same grace.

8. All the sacraments both of the Old, and the New Testament, signify the same thing, and the same communion with Christ. But the signification and communion of all the other sacraments is wholly spiritual. Therefore, it must be the same as it regards the Supper. All grant the truth of the minor proposition. The major is confirmed by what the Apostle says: "For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." "They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea; and they all did eat the same spiritual meat." (1 Cor. 12: 13; 10: 2.)

Obj. But all the sacraments do not signify the same thing: for baptism signifies washing by the blood of Christ, the Lord's supper the body and blood of Christ. Ans. The thing signified is not different, because as we have already shown, to be washed with the blood of Christ, and to drink his blood is the same thing. The manner in which the thing signified, which is one and the same, is expressed, is indeed different, on account of the different signs which have not the same analogy to that which is signified. Therefore, as the thing signified and promised in baptism, and also in circumcision and the Passover, is spiritual and not corporal, so it is likewise, in relation to the Supper.

III. The arguments drawn from the analogy, or correspondence of the articles of our faith.

1. There are strong arguments in support of the view which we have presented, drawn *from the article which has respect to the truth of the human nature of Christ.* The Word assumed a nature like unto ours in all things, sin excepted; and will retain the same to all eternity for our comfort and salvation. But human nature is not infinite, nor can it be at the same time in many places, nor visible and invisible. To be essentially present in many, and in all places at the same time is peculiar to the Godhead alone, according as it is said: "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." (Jer. 23: 34.) God is by this attribute distinguished from all creatures. Nor can the Godhead itself be at the same time visible and invisible, finite and infinite; but it remains always as to its substance invisible, incomprehensible and infinite; otherwise it would not be unchangeable. Hence we must not suppose when Christ says, *This is my body*, that his body then sat visibly at the table, and was at the same time invisible in the bread; or that it now remains at the same time visible in heaven, and is also contained invisibly in the bread.

2. *From the article of Christ's ascension.* Christ ascended truly, by which we mean, that he was taken up into heaven with his body visibly and locally, in such a manner that his body did not remain, nor does it now remain, on earth, but in heaven, and that he will come from thence to judge the world. Hence he is not in the bread. Or we may thus state the argument: The body of Christ is finite, seeing it is a true body. But it is now in heaven. Therefore it is not in the bread. The major proposition is established by

the article of Christ's ascension into to heaven. "While they beheld, he was taken up." "Seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth," &c. (Acts 1: 9. Col. 3: 1.) Again, if the true body of Christ is infinite, as our adversaries affirm, then it is also invisible and insensible. Hence that was not a true body of Christ, being only apparent, which was seen, suffered and moved upon the earth, and so all those things which are spoken of Christ in the articles of our faith, could not have been truly done, but must have been done only in appearance, so that we still remain under the power of death if this be true.

Here, however, two things must be observed: 1. The argument which we draw from the article of Christ's ascension, does not remove his body from the supper, as some slanderously say of us; but only from the bread; for the distance between heaven and earth, whilst it makes it impossible that Christ's body should exist in heaven, and be in the bread at the same time, does not stand in the way of his presence in the supper to be eaten spiritually by faith. Our faith in the promise joined to the bread and wine, beholds and embraces the body and blood of Christ, and all his benefits as most truly present in the supper. 2. The argument here deduced from the two articles of faith alluded to, overthrows the conceit of Christ's corporal presence in the bread; for if the human nature of Christ might be everywhere, or present at the same time in many places, his ascension would not prevent its being both in heaven and in the bread at one and the same time. But as the human nature of Christ is finite, and not present in many, nor in all places, it follows that the argument which we deduce from his ascension into heaven is irresistible. For as the consequence which naturally follows from the property of Christ's human nature, in respect to the first celebration of the supper, which we may thus state: The body of Christ sat at the table; therefore it was not in the bread, nor in the mouths of his disciples: as this consequence is legitimate and irresistible, so it is a proper consequence which we draw from the truth of the ascension of Christ into heaven, when we thus reason: The body of Christ is in heaven; therefore it is not in the bread, nor any where else upon the earth.

Obj. It is only human reason which decides that Christ's corporal presence in the bread is opposed to these articles of our faith. Therefore it may not in reality be opposed to them. Ans. We deny the antecedant; because Christian faith and the word of God teach in connection with reason, that the body of Christ, which is, indeed, human and finite, cannot exist at the same time in all, nor many places; and that now since the ascension it is not on earth, but in heaven, and will remain there, until Christ come to judge the quick and the dead. Hence it is not only repugnant to human reason, but also to the word of God, that Christ's body should be present at one and the same time in heaven and in the bread. It is, indeed, an incontrovertible truth that human reason is not to be heard in divine things, when it is in manifest opposition to the word of God; and that it should always submit to the holy Scriptures which contain a revelation of the divine will; yet it is not to be simply and unceremoniously thrust aside or rejected, no not even in divine things, as if the word of God could teach that which is in opposition to sound reason; but we must use it aright, that so we may distinguish truth from falsehood. God has endowed us with reason that we may be able, by the light of the understanding, to decide in regard to contradictory opinions, and that knowing

with certainty what is in harmony with the word of God, and what is in opposition to it, we may embrace the former and reject the latter. If this were not so, there would be no dogma so absurd, and impious — there would be nothing in the polluted sinks of Heretics, however detestible and monstrous, which could be refuted by the holy Scriptures; for all heretics and imposters always boast, that their opinions are not in opposition to the word of God, but that they only seem to contradict it, in the judgment of human reason.

To this it is objected as follows: The Scriptures attribute to the body of Christ many properties and prerogatives which are beyond and above nature, which our bodies do not possess, such as to walk upon the water, to be transfigured, to be carried up into heaven, to pass through a rock and closed doors, to be personally united to Deity, to be made a sacrifice for sin, &c. Therefore it is not absurd to say, that it is present at the same time in heaven and in the bread, or that it possesses ubiquity itself. Ans. The antecedent has falsehood mingled with what is true. The Scriptures no where affirm that the body of Christ passed through a rock, and doors that were closed. Hence we deny it. The other things which are enumerated are, indeed, spoken of in the Scriptures, but they are such things as may be found in connection with a nature that is truly human; for Peter also walked upon the water; and we shall also be transformed and ascend into heaven. But the ubiquity or presence of Christ's flesh, in many places at the same time, is never affirmed in the Scriptures. For to be everywhere present, or to be present at different places at the same time, is peculiar to the Godhead alone, which is infinite; but every creature is finite, and is by its own finiteness distinguished from the Creator. That, now, which is finite cannot be at the same time in more places than one. Hence it is that the Scriptures, and the most distinguished teachers in the ancient church, speak of this presence in many places as a most forcible argument of true Divinity. Christ says himself: "The Son of man which is in heaven." (John 3: 13.) Didymus says, "*The Holy Ghost himself, if he were a creature, would at least have a substance that would be limited, as is the case with all created things. For although invisible beings are not circumscribed in place, yet they are finite, as to the property of their substance. But the Holy Ghost has not a limited substance, seeing that he dwells in many.*" Tertullian says: "*If Christ be nothing more than a man, how could he be present wherever he is called upon; inasmuch as to be present everywhere does not belong to the nature of man, but to that of God.*" Hence our adversaries, when they imagine that these prerogatives are the cause of Christ's presence in many, and in all places, are guilty of admitting that as a cause which is none; or they, at least, argue from things that are unlike; for the cause of these things, and that of ubiquity is quite different.

3. *From the article of the communion of saints.* The communion of saints with Christ is the same now that it has ever been, or ever will be, both in regard to those who use the sacraments, and also in regard to those who are by necessity excluded from their use. For there is only one communion of saints with Christ, inasmuch as we are all one body in him. But the communion of saints with Christ has always been of a spiritual character, as the Apostle teaches when he says: "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit." "Hereby know we, that we dwell in him and

he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." "He is the vine; we are the branches." "He is the Head; we are the members." "He is the Bridegroom; we with the whole church constitute his Spouse." (1 Cor. 6: 17. 1 John 4: 15. John 15: 5. Eph. 1: 22; 4: 15, &c.) Or, the argument may be thus presented: all the saints have the same communion with Christ, those of the Old Testament as well as those of the New; those who have the opportunity of observing the supper, as well as those who have not the privilege. (1 Cor. 10. Eph. 4. Rom. 8.) Neither can we eat Christ in any other way, than the disciples did at the first celebration of this supper. But they ate him spiritually. Therefore, we also eat him in a similar manner.

We argue again from this same article: The eating of Christ is the same as his dwelling in us. But this is spiritual. Therefore, the eating of Christ is also spiritual. The major is evident from the fact that we eat Christ, that he may dwell in us, and we in him, and not that he should depart from us as soon as he is eaten. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him." (John 6: 56.) The minor is proven by this, that Christ's dwelling in us is the same as that of the Father. "If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14: 23.) But how does the Father abide or dwell in us? Assuredly by the Holy Spirit. Hence, it is in the same way that Christ abides with us and dwells in us. Here the following passages of Scripture are in point: "Hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." "I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him," &c. (1 John 4: 13. Eph. 3: 17. John 15: 5.)

4. *From the article of the forgiveness of sins.* If Christ be in the bread in a corporal manner, and be given by the hands of the minister, then forgiveness of sins ought to be sought from the hands of God on account of that which is in the bread, and which the minister has in his hand, whether the bread remains at the same time with him or not. For remission of sins for the sake of Christ is most especially to be sought whenever we celebrate the supper. Those who commune ought, therefore, to pray thus: *I beseech thee, O heavenly Father, that thou wouldst be gracious to me for the sake of this thy Son, who is in this bread, who is handled by the minister, and whom I eat with my mouth.* This is that shocking idolatry which is practiced in the Popish mass, which is doubtless so displeasing in the sight of God, that it were better for us to suffer a thousand deaths, than that we should ever be guilty of it. The gospel teaches us, however, that we ought to ask of God the forgiveness of sins, not for the sake of Christ who is in the bread and who is carried in the hands of the minister and eaten with the mouth, but for the sake of him who suffered and died for us, and who is now in heaven at the right hand of God interceding for us. Hence, we thus argue: That which goes to establish the shocking idolatry of the mass, is to be rejected. The corporal presence and oral manducation of Christ in the bread, go to establish the idolatry of the mass. Therefore, they are to be rejected.

6. We may here yet add the arguments drawn from *the sacrifice and worship of Christ.* Wherever it is evident that Christ is bodily present, whether it be in a visible or invisible manner, there he is to be worshipped

by having our thoughts and affections directed to that place. But Christ is not to be thus worshipped in the supper, for we are not to have our thoughts and affections turned to the bread or to the place of the bread. Therefore, he is not present in the bread in a corporal manner, nor in the place of the bread. The major proposition is too plain to need any proof. The minor is evident from this, that since the ascension of Christ into heaven, we cannot, without being guilty of manifest idolatry, associate divine worship with any particular place or thing, unless God expressly command it, or utter some promise in regard to it; for Christ has plainly taught us that we are now no longer to restrict our devotions to any particular place or thing on earth. "The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. Ye worship, ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4: 21–25.) And still further; if we are to worship Christ in the supper by having our thoughts and devotions directed to the bread, then the priests who offer sacrifices would have in their own hands that whole sacrifice, by which they offer the Son unto the Father for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness of sins; and so it would be necessary to repeat the crucifixion of Christ.

Obj. But Christ did not command that we should offer, or worship him in the bread, but that we should eat him. Therefore, neither the offering of Christ to the Father, nor the worshipping of him in the bread as the Papists do, can grow out of his corporal presence in the bread. Ans. Those who thus argue beg the question, for the Scriptures no where affirm that Christ commanded us to eat him in the bread. Then they also shift the question at issue; for the command which we have concerning the worship of Christ is general; "He is the Lord; and worship thou him." "Let all the angels of God worship him." (Ps. 45: 12. Heb. 16.) This general command, without any exception, or expectation of a special precept, should constrain us all to obey and adore Christ in the bread, if it were clearly evident that he was invisibly concealed in it, not less than if we saw him present with our eyes. So Thomas acted properly, when, without waiting for any special command, he worshipped toward the place where he saw Christ standing, exclaiming: "My Lord, and my God." (John 20: 28.) As long, therefore, as the idea of a corporal presence in the supper prevails, so long will the idolatry of the Papists continue; for the Papists themselves, when they make an offering of Christ in the mass, will not have us to understand this as if Christ were put to death thereby, but merely as an exhibition of Christ, who is present in the bread in a corporal manner, and as a seeking and obtaining the forgiveness of sins for the sake of him, whom the priests hold in their hands, and present unto the Father.

IV. The arguments drawn from parallel passages of Scripture, which teach the same doctrine in language which does not admit of any controversy.

1. Parallel passages, or phrases that are alike have the same sense and interpretation. All those phrases are regarded as similar, or as sacramental

phrases in which the names, or proper effects of the things signified are attributed to the signs; as, *circumcision is the covenant of God; the lamb is the Lord's Passover; the Sabbath is the covenant of God; the Levitical sacrifices are an atonement for sin; the blood of the victims offered as sacrifices, is the blood of the covenant; the covering of the ark is the mercy-seat; that rock was Christ; the bread is the body of Christ; the cup is the New Testament; baptism is the washing away of sin, and the washing of regeneration, &c.* (Gen. 17: 10. Ex. 12: 11; 31: 16. Lev. 1: 4. Ex. 24: 8; 26: 34. 1 Cor. 10: 3. &c.) Therefore, the interpretation of all these phrases is similar. God himself interprets some of them in this way, as may be seen by a reference to the above quotations where he calls circumcision the token of the covenant; the lamb the sign and memorial of the Passover, and the Sabbath the *sign* of the covenant. We may, therefore, justly interpret the rest in the same way, and say: The Levitical sacrifices signify the atonement which the Messiah made for sin; the blood of the victims is a sign which confirms the covenant, or it is the sign of the blood of Christ, by which the covenant was sanctified; the covering of the ark signified the mercy-seat; that rock signified Christ; the bread is a sacrament of the body of Christ; the cup is a sacrament sealing the new covenant; baptism is a sacrament of the washing away of sin, and of regeneration, &c.

2. The blood of Christ is the New Testament in the same sense in which the cup is. But the cup is the New Testament sacramentally, that is, it is the sign of it. Therefore, the blood of Christ is also the sign of the New Testament. That the major of this syllogism is true, is evident from this, that the words of Luke and Paul: *This cup is the New Testament in my blood;* and those of Matthew and Mark: *This is my blood of the New Testament*, have without doubt the same meaning. The minor is proven by the first argument, and cannot be understood in any other sense; for the New Testament is not an external ceremony, or thing; but it is the gracious reconciliation with God, which the gospel promises for the sake of the blood of Christ. The cup must then either be the thing promised, or it is the seal of the promise. But it is not the promise, nor the thing which is promised. Therefore, it is the seal of the promise.

3. We may here repeat the words of Paul: "The bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ." (1 Cor. 10: 16.) The bread is now the communion of the body of Christ, in the same sense in which it is also his body; because the words of Paul and Christ have the same meaning. Paul may, indeed be regarded as giving us an interpretation of the words of Christ. But the bread is the communion of the body of Christ sacramentally, that is, it is a sacrament, or sign of our spiritual communion with the body of Christ: for bread cannot properly and literally, be called a communion. Therefore, the bread is also sacramentally the body of Christ, which is to say, it is a sacrament, or sign of his body. That the communion, or communication of the body of Christ is spiritual, is proven by these arguments: 1. Paul speaks of such a communion as that by which we being many, are one bread, and one body, which is spiritual in its nature. 2. The communion of Christ of which the Apostle speaks, excludes the communion of devils. Hence he says: "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." (1 Cor. 10: 21.) This is not an

argument resulting from mere impropriety, as some suppose; but from an impossibility of the thing itself. It is the same as when Christ says, "Ye cannot serve God, and Mammon;" (Matt. 6: 24.) for the original word, which in both places is translated, *ye cannot*, is the same. Paul reasons in the same way when he says: "What concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" (2 Cor. 6: 15.) 3. This communion of saints with Christ, and of Christ with the faithful the Scriptures explain spiritually, as when it is said: "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ." If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1: 3–8.) This spiritual communion which the saints have with Christ, and he with them is the same as that, in which we profess our belief in the Creed. 4. Lastly, Chrysostom interprets the words of Paul as expressing a spiritual communion, saying: "*Why did not the Apostle use the word μετοχη, which means participation? That he might direct attention to something more excellent, viz: to that union which is of the most intimate nature.*" And a little further on he says: "*Why do I call it communion? because we are the very same body of Christ. What is the bread? It is the body of Christ. What are they made who receive the body of Christ? not many, but one body; for as bread is baked out of many grains, so are we also incorporated with Christ.* (Hom. 24. in 1 Cor. 10.)

4. The words of Christ, as recorded in the sixth chapter of John, are also here in point: "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life." (John 6: 62, 63.) In these words Christ expressly rejects the eating of his flesh with the mouth, and refutes it by two arguments which we have noticed on a former occasion; and at the same time establishes the idea of a spiritual manducation. Hence we are not to imagine a corporal eating of the body of Christ, seeing that the Scriptures expressly condemn it.

Obj. But the sixth chapter of John has no reference to the supper. Therefore it cannot be said to prove any thing against the oral manducation of the body of Christ instituted in the supper. Ans. But it is a false argument which proceeds to the denial of the whole, when there is only a denial in part. We admit that this chapter does not refer directly to the ceremony of the supper. But it does not follow from this, that it has no reference to it whatever. It has reference to the promise, *This is my body, which is given for you;* for this promise is drawn from the discourse of Christ in the sixth chapter of John, and is confirmed by the signs of bread and wine. It cannot, therefore, be understood of any other eating of Christ's body in the supper, than that which we have in his discourse in the gospel of John, which is spiritual; for as we have just seen it condemns the eating of his flesh orally. To this our adversaries reply: This chapter does not condemn an oral, but a Capernaitical eating; to which we answer that every eating of Christ's flesh with the mouth is Capernaitical, and, therefore, condemned; for a Capernaitical eating is not only a bloody tearing, and eating of the flesh of Christ, and chewing it with the teeth, but it is any kind of eating, which is done with the mouth. For the Caper

naites did not say, *How can this man give us his flesh to devour, to tear with the teeth*, &c., but they said, *How can this man give us his flesh to eat*, that is with the mouth. Neither does Christ withdraw their minds from a gross eating with the mouth, to that which is more refined in its nature; but directs them to his ascension into heaven, which would take place in a short time, when his body would be far removed from their mouths, from which we may infer that it was a spiritual eating of which he spake, which is effected by the Spirit and by faith.

5. From the fifty-fourth and sixth verses of this sixth chapter of John, it is also evident that to eat the flesh, and to drink the blood of Christ is to believe in Christ, to dwell in him, and to have him dwell in us; because the same effect of eternal life is attributed both to the eating of his flesh, and to faith in him. The Lord's supper now sanctions this same eating; for apart from this there can be no other promise shown in the whole gospel, which is sealed by the supper. Therefore, to eat the body, and to drink the blood of Christ in the supper, is to believe in Christ, to dwell in Christ, and to have him dwell in us.

6. We may here also quote the words of Paul, 1 Cor. 12: 13: "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit." From this passage we may deduce the two following arguments: 1. The eating of Christ in the supper is the same as the drinking. But the drinking is spiritual. Therefore the eating is also spiritual. 2. The eating of the body, and the drinking of the blood of Christ is common to all the faithful, even to the fathers of the Old Testament: *for we have all been made to drink into one Spirit.* But that eating which is with the mouth is not common to all the faithful; for the fathers who lived before the birth of Christ, could not in this way eat his flesh, which may also be said of infants, and many adults who have not the opportunity of observing the supper. Therefore, this eating of the flesh of Christ with the mouth, which is affirmed by our adversaries, is not that true eating, which the gospel promises, and which the supper seals.

The testimony of the Fathers in support of the view which we have advanced.

Having now presented the arguments which may be drawn from the holy Scriptures, and from the foundation of our faith, we may next adduce the testimony of the Fathers of the early and purer church, from which it will be seen that they teach the very same doctrine, which we do concerning the holy supper. We shall merely produce, from a very large number of extracts that might be made from their writings, a few passages which may serve as an index to the views, which they held and taught in reference to this subject.

Irenæus: *Panis terrenus accepta vocatione a verbo Dei, non amplius est communis panis, sed efficitur eucharistia, quæ constat ex duabus rebus, terrena & cœlesti.* Lib. 4. c. 34.

Irenaeus says: The earthly bread being so called by the word of God, is no longer common bread; but becomes the eucharist, which consists of two things, the earthly, and the heavenly.

Terrullianus: *Acceptum panem & distributum discipulis, corpus suum illum*

fecit: hoc est corpus meum, dicendo; id est, FIGURA CORPORIS MEI. Lib. 4. cont. Marcion.

Tertullian says: The bread which Christ took, and distributed among the disciples, he made his own body, saying, This is my body, that is, *The figure of my body.*

Clemens Alexandrinus: *Hoc est bibere Jesu sanguinem, esse participem incorruptionis Domini.* Pædag. lib. 2 cap. 2.

Clemens, of Alexandria, says: To drink the blood of Jesus is to be made a partaker of our Lord's immortality.

Cyprianus: *Nec potest videri sanguis ejus quo redemti & justificati sumus; esse in calice, quando vinum desit calici, quo Christi sanguis* OSTENDITUR, *qui scripturarum omnium sacramento & testimonio predicatur.* Idem: *Hæc quoties agimus, non dentes ad mordendum acuimus: sed fide sincera panem sanctum frangimus, & partimur, dum quod divinum & humanum est, distinguimus, et separamus, itemque simul separata jungentes, unum Deum & hominem fatemur; sed & nos ipsi corpus ejus effecti sacramento, & re sacramenti capiti nostro connectimur & unimur.* Lib. 2. epistola 3. Serm. de cœna.

Cyprian says: The blood of Christ with which we are redeemed and justified cannot seem to be in the chalice, when there is no wine in it, by which the blood of Christ *is showed*, which is spoken of in every sacrament and testimony of the Scriptures. Again: As often as we do this, we do not sharpen our teeth for the purpose of eating, but we break and distribute the holy bread with a true faith, whilst we distinguish, and separate that which is divine from that which is human, and joining them again when they are separated, we confess one God and man; we are also by this sacrament made his body, and are cemented, and united to our head by the thing signified.

Canon concelii Niceni: *In divina mensa rursus et jam hic non proposito panis & vino pueriliter adhereamus, sed sublato inultum mente per fidem; consideremus proponi in sacra illa mensa agnum Dei tollentem peccata mundi; qui sine mactatione a sacerdotibus sacrificatur: & pretiosum ejus corpus & sanguinem vere accipientes nos, credamus hæc esse nostræ resurrectionis* SYMBOLA. *Nam ideo etiam non multum, sed parum accipimus; ut agnoscamus quod non ad satietatem, sed ad sanctificationem accipiatur.* De divina mensa, & quid.

The canon of the Council of Nice says: Here is also the Lord's table; let us not childishly cleave to the bread and wine set before us, but let us, lifting our minds to heaven by faith, consider that on that holy table is placed the Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world, who offered himself as a sacrifice without being slain by the priests; and let us, receiving his body and precious blood, believe that they are *signs* of our resurrection. It is for this reason that we only receive a small quantity, that we may know that it is not received for satisfying, but for our sanctification.

Basilius: *Apposuimus* ANTITYPTA *sancti corporis & sanguinis tui.* In Litur.

Basil says: We have set before us the *figures* of the holy body and blood of Christ.

Hilarius: *Hæc accepta atque hausta id efficiunt, ut & nos in Christo & Christus in nobis sit.* De Trin. lib.

Hilary says: That which is eaten, and drunk produces this effect, that we are in Christ, and Christ in us.

Gregorius Nazianz. ANTITYPTA pretiosi sanguinis & corporis Christi. Orat. de Pasch.

Gregory Nizeanzen says: *The figures* of the body and precious blood of Christ.

Ambrosius: *Quia morte Domini liberati sumus, hujus rei memores, in edendo & potando carnem & sanguinem Domini pro nobis oblata sunt,* SIGNIFICAMUS. Idem: *Hæc oblatio est* FIGURA CORORIS & SANGUINIS *Domini nostri* Jesu *Christi.* In 1. Cor. 2. De Sacr. lib. 4. c. 5.

Ambrose says: Because we have been redeemed by the death of our Lord, we, being mindful thereof, *signify* in eating and drinking the flesh and blood of the Lord which were offered for us. Again: This offering is a *figure of the body and blood* of our Lord Jesus Christ. In 1 Cor. 11. De Sacr. lib. 4. c. 5.

Augustinus: *Non dubitavit Dominus dicere, Hoc est corpus meum, cum daret signum sui corporis.* Idem: *Dominus Judam adhibuit ad convivium; in quo corporis & sanguinis fui* FIGURAM *discipulis suis commendavit & tradidit.* Idem: *Si sacramenta quandam similitudinem earum rerum quarum sacramenta sunt, non haberent, omnino sacramenta non essent. Ex hac autem similitudine plerumque etiam ipsarum rerum nomina accipiunt Sicut ergo secundum quendam modum, sacramentum corporis Christi, corpus Christi est, sacramentum sanguinis Christi sanguis Christi est: ita sacramentum fidei fides este.* Idem: *Sicut ergo cœlestis panis, qui caro Christi est,* SUO MODO *vocatur corpus* CHRISTI *; cum revera sit* SACRAMENTUM CORPORIS CHRISTI*; idlius videlicet, quod visibile, palpabile, mortale in cruce positum est: vocaturque ipsa immolatio carnis, quæ sacerdotis manibus fit,* CHRISTI *passio, mors, crucifixio,* NON REI VERITATE, SED SIGIFICANTE MYSTERIO: *sic sacramentum fidei, quo baptismus intelligitur, fides est.* Idem: *Ista, fratres, ideo dicuntur sacramenta, quod in eis aliud videtur, aliud intelligitur. Quod videtur, speciem habet corporalem: quod intelligitur, fructum habet spiritualem;* Cont. Adem. c 12. In Psal. 3. Epist. 23. ad Bonif. In fentet. Prosper. de consec. dist. 2. c. hoc est. Ser. ad infant.

Augustin says: Our Lord did not hesitate to say, This is my body when he gave the *sign* of his body. Again: The Lord admitted Judas to that feast in which he gave to his disciples the *figure* of his body and blood. Again: If the sacraments had not a certain correspondence with the things of which they are sacraments, they would be no sacraments at all. And it is on account of this correspondence that they very often receive the names of the things themselves. As, therefore, the sacrament of the body of Christ is, after a certain manner, the body of Christ, and as the sacrament of the blood of Christ is his blood, so the sacrament of faith is faith. Again: As the celestial bread, which is Christ's flesh, is in some way called the body of Christ in as much as it is the *sacrament of his body*, which is to say, of that visible, tangible, and mortal body which was nailed to the cross; and as the sacrificing of his flesh, which was accomplished by the hands of the priest, is called the passion, death, and crucifixion, *not in the truth of the thing, but signifying it in a mystery;* so the sacrament of faith, which is baptism, is faith. Again: These, my brethren, are called sacraments, because in them one thing is seen, and another is understood. That which is seen has a corporal form, whilst that which is understood has a spiritual benefit.

Chrysostomus: *Hic est sanguis meus, qui effunditur in remissionem peccatorum: quod dicebat, ut ostenderet, passionem & crucem mysterium esse, & discipulos consolaretur.* In Matt. hom. 83.

Chrysostom says: This is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins, which Christ said to show that his passion, and cross constitute a mystery, and that it might administer comfort to his disciples. In Matt. hom. 83.

Theodoretus: *Servator certe noster nomina commutavit, & corpori quidem idem, quod erat symboli ac signi, nomen imposuit: symbolo autem quod erat corporis. Causa mutationis manifesta est iis, qui sunt divinis mysteriis initiati. Volebat enim eos, qui sunt divinorum mysteriorum participes, non attendere naturam eorum quæ videntur; sed propter nominum mutationem, mutationi, quæ fit ex gratia credere. Qui enim, quod natura est corpus, triticum & panem appellavit, & vitem se ipsum rursus nominavit, is symbola quæ videntur, appellatione corporis & sanquinis honoravit, non naturam quidem mutans; sed naturæ gratiam adjiciens.* Dial. 1.

Theodoret says: Our Saviour evidently changed the names of the signs, and the things signified, and gave the same name to his body which belongs to the sign; and to the sign that which belongs to his body. The reason of this change is manifest to those who have been initiated into divine mysteries. For he designs that those who partake of these divine mysteries, should not look to the things which are seen; but on account of the change of the names should believe the change which is made through grace. For he who called, that which is naturally a body, wheat and bread, and also called himself a vine, honored the signs which are seen with the title of his body and blood, not indeed by changing their nature, but by adding grace thereto.

There is a notable saying of Macarius, the Monk, which we may also here repeat: "The bread and wine are a *type or figure* corresponding with the flesh, and blood of Christ; and those who receive the bread which is showed, eat the flesh of Christ spiritually." Macarius Homil. 27. We might add many other testimonies from the writings of the Fathers, which for the sake of brevity we omit.

OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

We may now easily see what we are to think of the doctrine of transubstantiation. It is a wicked device of the Papists, which we shall briefly prove by a variety of arguments. Before doing this, however, it is proper that we should first state, in a few words, what the Papists understand by transubstantiation.

They suppose that by the act, or force of consecration, by which they mean the repeating, over the elements of bread and wine, the words, *This is my body; This cup is the New Testament in my blood;* the bread and wine are converted, or changed as to their substance, into the body and blood of Christ, so that all that remains of the bread and wine is the form, or accidents, viz.: the appearance, the smell, the taste, the weight, &c. They, therefore, consider the words, which are used in the consecration of the elements, productive, and creative. They hold that the change is effected, or made complete, in the very instant in which the priest pronounces the last syllable, DY; *This is my bo*-DY, after which the elements do not remain any longer bread and wine; but become the body and blood of Christ, which are now substantially present, and contained under the form of bread and wine, so that all who partake of them, eat his body, and drink his blood with the mouth.

As to the manner in which this change is effected, they do not agree among themselves. There are some who maintain that the substance of bread and wine is changed by transubstantiation, into the substance of the body and blood of Christ, so that the bread and wine become, as to their essence, the body and blood of Christ, retaining merely their external forms, which change is called *a substantial change*, or a change of the substance. There are others, again, who hold that the substance of bread and wine is not changed; but that it is annihilated, and that the substance of the body and blood of Christ takes its place, so that, after the consecration, the substance of Christ's body and blood assumes the form, and accidents of the substance of the bread and wine, which change is called *a formal change*, or a change of the form. Lombard gives an exposition of both views, (lib. 4, dist. II.) and seems to approve of the former. The Papists call both changes transubstantiation. They affirm also that the pronoun *this*, denotes some vague or indefinite substance, contained under these accidents, in general, without having any reference to quantity, or quality, so that it refers neither to the bread, nor to the body of Christ; but to what was contained under the form, which, before consecration, was bread, but which, by the force of the words, became the body of Christ; so that the words, *This is my body*, mean according to their view, *That which is contained under this, or under these forms, is my body.*

They also differ widely among themselves in regard to the accidents, as to where they are grounded, or situated, whether in the body of Christ, or in the air, or in the original matter of the bread and wine, or whether they are the properties of any subject. The common opinion is, that they exist without any subject. This is the view of the Schoolmen, and of all the Papists, and consists of two principal parts; the one having reference to transubstantiation, and the other to the eating of Christ's body with the mouth. But both of these things are inconsistent with the words of Christ, and are a wicked device. As it respects the eating of Christ's body with the mouth, under the form of bread, it is overthrown by the same arguments by which we have established the spiritual eating of Christ's body. And as it respects transubstantiation, we thus refute it:

1. That which is Christ's body in the supper, remains, and is neither changed, nor annihilated, otherwise the body of Christ would not remain, or be present in the eucharist. But the bread in the supper is the body of Christ, sacramentally, as we have already shown: Therefore the bread in the supper remains, and is neither changed, nor annihilated. The minor proposition has already been proven, and may be established more fully, 1. By the words of Luke and Paul: *This cup is the New Testament*, &c. *The bread is the communion of the body of Christ.* 2. By this argument, drawn from these words: That which Christ broke, he called his body. But he broke the bread, and not some indefinite substance, or merely the accidents of the bread. Therefore, the bread is the body of Christ. 3. It is also proven thus: The pronoun *this*, refers either to the bread, or to the mere accidents of the bread, or to the body of Christ, or to some indefinite substance. But it cannot refer to some indefinite substance, for it was bread that Christ gave, and brake, and not something general, under the form of bread. Nor can it refer to the body of Christ, visible or invisible: for his visible body sat, and talked with the disciples; and an invisible body, Christ never had. The Papists themselves, confess that the body of

Christ is not present, under the form of bread, when the priest commences to repeat the word *This*, but only after the change is effected, which, as we have already remarked, takes place when the last syllable of the words used in the consecration of the elements is pronounced. Nor can it refer to the mere accidents of the bread; for it was not the mere accidents that Christ broke. Therefore the particle *this*, cannot refer to any thing else but the bread, so that the words of Christ, *This is my body*, must mean, *This bread is my body.*

2. Christ broke bread. But he did not break his body. Therefore the bread is not, in reality, his body.

3. The body of Christ was delivered for us unto death. But the bread was not thus given for us. Therefore, the bread is not, in reality, the body of Christ.

4. Christ does not say, as the advocates of the doctrine of transubstantiation do, *My body is under these forms;* or, *My body is contained under these forms.* Therefore they do not retain, but pervert the words of Christ.

5. Christ did not say, *Let this be made;* but, *This is my body.* Therefore, the words of Christ do not change the bread into the substance of his body, but merely teach, that the bread in this use is the body of Christ in a sacramental sense.

6. Paul expressly calls that which is given and received, bread, both before and after it is eaten. Therefore, the bread is neither annihilated, nor changed into the substance of the body of Christ, but remains bread.

7. In every sacrament there are two things; the signs and the things signified, or, as Irenaeus says, the earthly and the heavenly things, without which there can be no sacrament. But transubstantiation takes away from the eucharist the sign, or that which is earthly, which is bread and wine. Therefore, it destroys the nature, or true idea of a sacrament.

8. The mere shadow, or form of bread and wine, cannot confirm faith in heavenly things, but practices a deception, inasmuch as it is not what it appears to be. But the signs in the eucharist ought to confirm our faith in heavenly things, viz.: that we are as certainly fed with the body and blood of our Lord, as we are certain that we receive the bread and the wine: for the sacraments were instituted to confirm our faith by the use of visible signs. Therefore, transubstantiation which changes the signs into a mere shadow, cannot be true.

9. Transubstantiation destroys the analogy which there is between the sign, and the thing signified, of which Augustin speaks when he says, "*That the body of Christ so nourishes the soul, as the bread nourishes the body; and as one bread is baked out of many grains, so we, who partake of this one bread, being many, are made one bread, and one body.*" (Epis. 23, ad Bonif.) But the mere accidents of bread and wine cannot represent or sustain this analogy, because they cannot of themselves nourish; nor can we say, as the accidents of bread and wine nourish the body and sustain natural life, so the body of Christ nourishes the soul unto eternal life: for in this case the analogy would be between that which is real, and that which is a mere shadow. Therefore, the analogy which holds between the sign, and the thing signified, is evidently inconsistent with the doctrine of transubstantiation, and so refutes it.

CONCERNING CONSUBSTANTIATION.

The Papists, from what we have said, imagined that two great miracles were wrought in the eucharist by virtue of the consecration of the elements; the changing of the substance of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and the subsistence of the accidents of the bread and wine, independent of any subject; both of which may easily be refuted; for the former evidently contradicts the analogy of the entire Christian faith, whilst the latter is at war with all sound philosophy. And, as to that virtue which there is in the act of consecration, of which they make so much account, it is nothing more than a magical device of the devil and of human ingenuity.

When some of the ancient Doctors perceived these absurdities, they rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation, and coined that of consubstantiation, which teaches the co-existence of two substances in the same place, or the presence of the body and blood of Christ, not under the forms of bread and wine, but in, or under the bread and wine itself. These persons maintained that the signs were not transubstantiated, or changed as to their substance; but that they were consubstantiated, by which they meant, that the bread and wine remained; but that the body and blood of Christ were substantially present *with*, *in*, and *under* the bread and wine, and eaten and drunk with the mouth.

Lombard refers to this view, and asserts that it was already before his time advocated by certain persons; and calls it a paradox—a strange view.

Guitmund attributes it to Berengarius, after his recantation, and calls it *impanation*.

Others regard Walrame as the originator of this view, against whom Anselm wrote two books which are still extant.

Others, again ascribe it to Rupert, who lived shortly after Guitmund, about the year of our Lord 1124.

Peter, cardinal of Cambray, declared that he would rather embrace consubstantiation than transubstantiation, had not the church of Rome decided differently. He lived about the year of our Lord 1416.

At length Luther, falling in with the opinion of this cardinal of Cambray, as he himself testifies, did not at first regard it as an article of faith, to believe that the substance of the bread remains, or does not remain with the body of Christ, but maintained that either view might be held without subjecting their advocates to the charge of heresy. Subsequently, however, it seemed more probable to him that the bread should remain, and that the body of Christ should be present *in*, *with*, and *under* the bread. This is now the generally received opinion of those who call themselves Lutherans. They interpret the words of Christ, *This is my body*, thus, *In, with, and under this bread is my body*; and they boast equally as much as the Papists, that they retain the words of Christ in their literal sense, without any trope or figure. And whenever they contend with the Papist, they refer the particle *This* to the bread alone, which itself, according to their view, is the body of Christ. But when they are brought into controversy with us, whom they call Sacramentarians, then the particle *This*, no longer refers to the bread only, but to the bread, with the body of Christ which is invisibly concealed in it, and the sense of the words, *This is my body*, they affirm to be this: *This bread, and my body which is concealed in this bread, is my body*. This their gloss, they prove, as they say, with plain

and familiar illustrations, so that Christ, when he gave his body invisibly in the bread, said, *This is my body*, just as the farmer says of the grain in his sack, *This is grain*, pointing to the sack; or as the merchant, in speaking of the money in his purse, says, as he holds it up, *This is my money*; or as the mother says of her child lying in the cradle, *This is my child*, pointing to the cradle; or as the vender of wine says, as he hands the cup, *This is wine*. These illustrations are gathered from their writings and disputations.

But the same thing happens unfortunately to these good men, which the poet says of another class of persons:

> Stulti dum vitant vitia, in contraria currunt.
> Fools when they run from certain vices, rush into the opposite extremes.

For instead of the absurd miracle of the Papists, in regard to the subsistence of the accidents of the bread and wine, independent of any subject, they imagine another still more absurd, viz: the penetration of two bodies; so that they may be said to have wandered farther, than the Papists themselves from the words of Christ, whether we regard the letter or sense of the words. For the words, if taken literally, must be thus understood: *This*, that is, *this bread, is my body*; and if we have respect to the sense, or true meaning of the words, it must be: *This visible bread which is broken and given is my true and essential body given for you.* It is my true body, not by any change of the essence, as the Papists believe, (for the Word did not assume bread, neither was bread delivered or crucified for us,) but it is my true body in a mystical sense, and according to a sacramental form of speech, as Christ himself, and Paul, and all the orthodox fathers have understood it. The interpretation which the advocates of transubstantiation put upon the words of Christ, is far from being their literal and true sense; for it is not true that the Papists retain the letter, seeing that they put in the place of the words of Christ, *this is my body*, this gloss: *This thing, or indefinite substance contained under these forms is my body*; much less, therefore, do the consubstantialists retain the literal and true meaning of the words of Christ, seeing that they substitute their own words in the place of what Christ said, saying, *in, with, and under this bread is my body;* or, *the bread and the body of Christ, which is invisibly concealed in this bread, is my body* For neither is the bread by itself, nor the bread with the body of Christ concealed in it, properly the body of Christ; as a purse, whether full or empty, is not properly and without a figure of speech called money. And as to the various illustrations, or forms of speech, which they bring forward for the purpose of establishing their view, they are evidently foreign; for as it respects the instances to which we have already referred, that which is expressed by them is plain, as soon as it is uttered, that grain is in the sack, money in the purse, an infant in the cradle, and wine in the cup. But that the body of Christ is in the bread, does not appear so clearly, neither can it be proved, since there is an article of the Christian faith which declares that it is in heaven.

OF THE SCHISM OF THE CONSUBSTANTIALISTS.

The words of Christ, *This is my body*, were at first the only foundation upon which Luther based his view of the presence of Christ in the supper. Subsequently in the controversy which he had with those who opposed the

view of consubstantiation, he took refuge in the years 27 and 28 to the doctrine of ubiquity, and instead of the one foundation upon which he at first based his view, he now proposed four: 1. The personal union of the two natures in Christ. 2. The right hand of God, which is everywhere. 3. The truth of God, who cannot lie. 4. The three-fold manner of the existence of Christ's body in any place. Being at length driven from these, he again betook himself to the words of Christ, and desired that all disputation as to ubiquity might be brought to an end. Since the time of Luther, however, some who profess his name, not finding a sufficient support for their cause in the words of Christ, have again taken shelter under the doctrine of ubiquity, and to this day regard it as the main stay of their peculiar view. Yet there are others who reject it altogether. It is to this diversity of sentiment that the schism of the consubstantialists traces its origin. There are some who will be Lutherans *simply*, who defend impanation or the existence of Christ's body in the bread, and the oral manducation by the words of Christ alone. There are other *multi-presentiary* and *omni-potentiary Lutherans*, who hold that the body of Christ is present at the same time in many hosts on account of the omnipotency really communicated to it. And, finally, there are some *omni-presentiary, or ubiquitarian Lutherans*, who, for the purpose of defending the presence of Christ's body in the bread, seize the shield of ubiquity, and teach that the body of Christ, by virtue of its union with the Word, is every where present; and, therefore, present also in the bread, before and after its use in the supper, and that the rite and consecration merely cause it to be eaten in the bread. Our young divines, that they may have a correct understanding of this controversy, must not be ignorant of these things; for, from what we have said, they may see that to this day the doctrine of consubstantiation rests upon two main pillars, or props—*ubiquity and the words of Christ*. We have already explained what is meant by ubiquity, and given a sufficient refutation of it in the exposition of the articles relating to the personal union of the two natures in Christ, his ascension into heaven, and sitting at the right hand of God the Father, to which we refer the reader. And as to the words of Christ, they neither teach the doctrine of consubstantiation, nor will they admit of such an interpretation, the Papists themselves being witnesses in the case. The ubiquitarians also acknowledge this in their writings, and have for this reason invented the doctrine of ubiquity, because they clearly saw that their views could not be sustained by the words of Christ; but would soon be overthrown if made to rest on this foundation.

Christ said, *This is my body which is given for you.* These words, however, the consubstantialists do not retain, neither as to the letter, nor as to the sense, when they say, *In, with, and under this bread is my body.* We do not, therefore, need any other arguments for the refutation of consubstantiation, than the words of Christ, to which we direct the attention of the advocates of this doctrine, and thus reason with them: Christ did not say, In this bread, is my body; but, This is my body. But these forms of speech do not express the same thing; for the former declares what is in the bread, and where the body of Christ is; whilst the latter declares what the bread itself is in the eucharist. Therefore, those who teach that the body of Christ is in the bread, and not that it is the bread itself, retain neither the letter, nor the sense of the words of Christ.

Objections in favor of Consubstantiation refuted.

Obj. 1. It is a common form of speech, when two things which are joined together are given at the same time, the one apparent, and the other not, that that alone which is not apparent should be named; as we ordinarily say of a purse filled with money, *This is money;* and of a cask of wine, *This is wine.* Christ in the supper, giving in the same manner two things jointly, viz: bread, and his body, named that only which was not apparent under the bread, saying: *Take, this is my body.* Therefore, the form of speech which is here used, is common and proper; and does not need any explanation. We reply to the major of this syllogism as follows: It is, indeed, a usual form of speech, when it is evident that the thing which is not apparent, and which is named, is contained in that which is apparent, as it is plain that money is in the purse, and wine in the cask; otherwise it would neither be a usual, clear, nor correct form of speech to say of an empty purse, this is money, &c. But it is not apparent, nor have the consubstantialists as yet proven, that the body of Christ was concealed in the bread, when he said in reference to it, *This is my body;* as it is evident that money is in the purse, and wine in the cask, when it is said, *This is money, this is wine.* Yea, we affirm in opposition to the consubstantialists, that the body of Christ was not concealed in the bread in the first supper, but reclined at the table, and is now in heaven, where it will remain until he will come to judge the quick and the dead. Therefore, this argument of our opponents is a begging of the question at issue. We also deny what is asserted in the minor proposition; for Christ, having taken and broken, not his body, but the bread which was on the table, giving it to the disciples, said: *Take this (that is, this bread) is my body;* which interpretation we prove by the following arguments: 1. Christ said of the cup, *This cup is the New Testament.* 2. Paul refers the particle this to the bread, when he says, *The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ.* 3. The bread, and the body of Christ, when taken together, are neither properly nor figuratively the very body of Christ, so that Christ by this interpretation is made to utter a vain tautology, saying, *My body, is my body.* We in like manner deny the consequence drawn from the above syllogism, because there is more in the conclusion than in the premises. They conclude that the form of speech is common and proper. But the terms, common and proper, have not the same form and signification; for the most common form of speech may be figurative; as is the case with the common, and yet synecdochical forms of speech to which we have so often referred, *This is money; this is wine.* For who is so simple as to believe that the purse alone, or the purse with the money, is properly money. So the sacramental form of speech in reference to the Passover was common and well known to the disciples: "Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?" (Matt. 26: 17.) And yet they did not speak properly, but figuratively, attributing to the sign the name of the thing signified, by a sacramental metonymy. Hence all that follows legitimately from the above premises, is that the words of Christ were common, plain and understood by the disciples; but not that they were understood properly, literally, and without any figure.

Obj. 2. Christ said, *This is my body.* Christ now is true. Therefore, we must believe him, setting aside all philosophical subtlety; and as a matter of consequence, must understand his words simply, and literally. Ans.

There is here an incorrectness in regarding that as a cause, which is none. For the truth of Christ merely brings it to pass that his words are true; yea, most true, which we ought to believe, setting aside all philosophical subtlety; but this is no reason why the words of Christ should be understood literally, and properly; for he who speaks figuratively may also speak that which is true, as Christ was no less true, yea, the truth itself, when he said: *I am the light of the world; I am the door; I am the good shepherd; I am the true vine; my Father is the husbandman; and ye are the branches;* than when he said: *This is my body.* Those, therefore, who have the boldness to say that figurative forms of speech are lies, ought to be hissed ought of our schools, and denounced. We may also invent the argument and reason thus: Christ is true; therefore, he did not say, that his body was concealed in the bread, when all the disciples saw that it reclined at the table. So we may also in like manner retort the consequence which our adversaries draw from the above syllogism and say: The words of Christ are to be understood simply; therefore, no interpretation is to be put upon them, which conflicts with the letter, as when it is said, *in*, *with*, and *under* the bread is the body of Christ, or that the bread is the closet or covering of the body of Christ.

Obj. 3. Christ is omnipotent. Therefore, he can bring it to pass, that his body may be really in the bread. Ans. That, however, is no just conclusion which infers that a thing will be done, because it may be done. The question is not, what Christ can do, but what he will do. He has no where promised the presence of his body in the bread, or in the place of the bread. We do not, therefore, take anything from his omnipotence, when we reject such a presence as our opponents advocate. To this it is objected as follows: The bread is present in the place of the supper. The bread is the body of Christ. Therefore, the body of Christ is present in the supper. Ans. But the minor proposition of this syllogism is figurative, according to the confession of our adversaries themselves; for James Andreae, in the controversy at Maulbronn, when he could in no other way extricate himself from the difficulties which pressed themselves upon the views which he advocated, openly confessed that when it is said, *The bread is the body of Christ*, the language is figurative; but that it is proper when it is said, This is my body. This same Andreae afterwards wrote, that when the phrase, *The bread is the body of Christ*, is used, it is to be understood properly, and without any figure. Is this not to blow hot and cold from the same mouth?

Obj. 4. The words of Christ cannot be changed. Christ said this is my body. Therefore, the word *signifies* ought not to be substituted for *is*. Ans. 1. We grant the whole argument; for we do not substitute the word *signifies*, for *is*, nor do we change the words of Christ, but we retain them as they were uttered by Christ himself. But we maintain that the true and natural sense of these words is, that the bread is the body of Christ symbolically, that is, it is the sacrament or sign of the body of Christ; or, it signifies the body of Christ. Christ himself interprets these words thus, when he said, *This do in remembrance of me.* So does Paul when he says, "*This cup is the New Testament in my blood.*" Tertulian says: "*The bread which Christ took and distributed among the disciples he made his body, saying, This is my body, that is, it is the* FIGURE *of my body.*" Ambrose in like manner, says: "*This offering is the* FIGURE *of the body and blood*

of our Lord." Augustin also says: "*Our Lord did not hesitate to say, This is my body, when he gave* THE SIGN *of his body.*" 2. We may turn the arguments against our opponents thus: The words of Christ must not be changed. Therefore, the interpretation which the advocates of transubstantiation put upon the words of Christ, when they say, *Under these forms is, or is contained my body*, is false; as also that of the advocates of consubstantiation, when they say, *In, with and under this bread, is my body invisibly present.* 3. The words of Christ must not be changed, so as to express a different idea from that which he intended. And yet they are often to be changed in order that we may properly understand them, as when he said, "Pluck out thine eye." "If any man will take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." (Matt. 5: 29, 40.) Words must, therefore, be understood according to the nature of the things spoken of.

Obj. 5. The language used in testaments must be understood properly, unless there be something about the will of the testator which gives occasion for contention. The supper is the New Testament. Therefore, the language used in reference to it must be understood properly. Ans. We reply to the major proposition, that the language used in testaments must be understood properly if it be spoken properly; and figuratively, if it be spoken figuratively. But if it is maintained that every word must be understood properly, we deny the major; for it is sufficient if the language be clear and intelligible, although it may not be spoken properly, but figuratively. When we know the intention and will of the testator, it is useless to dispute about the language, or words of the testament. So God in the Old Testament spoke figuratively of circumcision, of the Paschal Lamb and of sacrifices. So Christ also spoke figuratively in the New Testament, when he said, *Take and drink, This cup is the New Testament in my blood.* For there is here a double figure: 1. A synecdoche, when he commands them to drink the cup, meaning the wine in the cup. 2. A metonymy, when he calls the cup the New Testament, meaning the reconciliation of the human race with God, sealed with his blood.

Obj. 6. The eating of bread is with the mouth. But the eating of the body is also the eating of bread. Therefore the eating of the body is with the mouth. Ans. The minor proposition must either be understood figuratively, or else it is false. If it is spoken figuratively, it must be thus understood: The eating of the body is the thing signified, and sealed by the eating of the bread. If it is thus understood it proves nothing, inasmuch as there is a change in the kind of affirmation which is made. But if it be understood properly it is false; for the eating of bread is external, corporal and visible; whilst the eating of the body is internal, spiritual and invisible. They are, therefore, not properly one and the same kind of eating; but as the thing signified is distinct from the sign, so the reception of both the sign and the thing signified is distinct, although each occurs at the same time in the lawful use of the sacraments.

Obj. 7. That which quickens and nourishes us must necessarily be received. The body and blood of Christ quicken and nourish us. Therefore, they must necessarily be received, that is, eaten and drank with the mouth. Ans. Nothing can be inferred from mere particulars. Or we may thus reply to the major proposition: That which nourishes and quickens us naturally, by being brought into contact with the body, as is the case with common bread, does not, indeed, nourish and strengthen us,

unless it be eaten with the mouth. But it is far different as it respects the nourishment of the soul, which is spiritual. The body of Christ does not nourish us naturally, for it does not produce in us any new qualities, as medicine; but it nourishes and quickens us in a manner different from that which is natural, which requires that we should receive it differently. Now as to the manner in which the body and blood of Christ nourish us, it has, in the first place, a respect to his merit. For the body of Christ was delivered, and his blood shed for us; and it is in view of this that God grants unto us eternal life. Hence Christ's body and blood must quicken us in this manner, as meriting for us eternal life. Secondly, we are quickened and nourished, when we receive by a true faith the merit of the body and blood of Christ; that is, when we believe that we shall have eternal life for the sake of the merit of Christ's body, and blood broken and shed for us. This faith now rests upon Christ as crucified, and not as dwelling in us after a corporal manner. Thirdly, we are quickened by the body and blood of Christ when we are united to him by the same Spirit, who works the same things in us, which he does in Christ; for unless we are ingrafted into Christ, we do not please God, who will receive us into his favor, and grant unto us the remission of our sins, only upon the condition, that we are ingrafted into Christ and united to him by that faith, which the Holy Ghost works in us. This now being the manner in which we are quickened and nourished by the body and blood of Christ, there is no necessity that his body and blood should descend, or be made to enter into our bodies, in order that we may be quickened by them.

To this it is objected: Our bodies, as well as our souls, are fed and nourished with the body and blood of Christ unto everlasting life. Therefore, it is necessary that our bodies, as well as our souls, should eat and drink. Our bodies now eat and drink orally. Ans. The major of this syllogism, *whatsoever is fed with the body of Christ is nourished unto eternal life*, which is omitted, is false if understood in its general sense. For we might ask, Do the different parts of the body, therefore, eat, because they are nourished by the food which is received by the mouth? It is sufficient that eating is by the mouth, as an instrument provided by nature, for the purpose of communicating nourishment to the whole system. So it is not necessary, that our bodies should eat with the mouth the body of Christ, in order that they may be nourished unto eternal life. It is sufficient that we receive spiritual food with the mouth of faith, that spiritual nourishment and life may be transfused through the whole man.

Question 79. Why then doth Christ call the bread his body, and the cup his blood, or the new covenant in his blood; and Paul the "communion of the body and blood of Christ?"

Answer. Christ speaks thus not without good reason, namely, not only thereby to teach us, that as bread and wine support this temporal life, so his crucified body and shed blood are the true meat and drink whereby our souls are fed to eternal life; but more especially by these visible signs and pledges to assure us, that we are as really partakers of his true body and blood, (by the operation of the Holy Ghost,) as we receive by the mouths of our bodies these holy signs in remembrance of him; and that all his sufferings and obedience are as certainly ours, as if we had in our own persons suffered and made satisfaction for our sins to God.

EXPOSITION.

Seeing then that the words of Christ, *This is my body*, do not teach transubstantiation, nor consubstantiation, we must now enquire, Why, then, does Christ call the bread his body, and the cup his blood; that is, why does he attribute the names of the things signified to the signs?

There are two reasons on account of which Christ thus speaks. The first is *on account of the analogy* which there is between the bread and the body of Christ. The other is *on account of the certainty*, or the confirmation of what the signs and things signified, exhibit jointly in the lawful use of the sacraments.

The correspondence, or analogy which there is between the bread and the body of Christ consists in these things: 1. As bread and wine support this temporal life, so the body and blood of Christ are the true meat and drink by which our souls are fed unto eternal life. 2. As bread and wine are received with the mouth, so the body and blood of Christ are received by faith which is the mouth of the soul. 3. As bread is not taken into the system whole, but is eaten, being broken; so the body of Christ is received, being sacrificed and broken upon the cross. 4. As bread and wine do not profit those who eat and drink them without any appetite or desire, and as it is necessary for us to come to the table hungry and thirsty; so the body and blood of Christ profit us nothing unless we come to his table hungering and thirsting after righteousness. 5. As out of many grains one meal is ground and one bread is baked, and as out of many berries pressed together one wine floweth; so we, being many, are, by the use of these signs, made one body, and grow up into one body with Christ, and among ourselves. The *certainty*, or confirmation of our faith is in like manner a reason why Christ affirms of the signs, what is peculiar to the thing signified. For the signs declare that the sacrifice of Christ is accomplished, and that for our salvation, as certainly, as we have the signs; yea, that we are fed with the crucified body and shed blood of Christ as certainly as we receive the sacred signs of the body and blood of Christ

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THIRTIETH LORD'S DAY.

Question 80. What difference is there between the Lord's supper and the Popish mass?

Answer. The Lord's supper testifies to us, that we have a full pardon of all sin by the only sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which he himself has once accomplished on the cross; and that we by the Holy Ghost are ingrafted into Christ, who, according to his human nature, is now not on earth, but in heaven, at the right hand of God his Father, and will there be worshipped by us: — but the mass teacheth that the living and the dead have not the pardon of sins, through the sufferings of Christ, unless Christ is also daily offered for them by the priests; and further, that Christ is bodily under the form of bread and wine, and therefore is to be worshipped in them; so that the mass, at bottom, is nothing else than a denial of the one sacrifice and sufferings of Jesus Christ, and an accursed idolatry.

EXPOSITION.

This Question is necessary on account of the errors, and horrid abuses which the Mass has introduced into the Church. It is otherwise asked, Why is the mass to be abolished? This question, however, is contained in the above; because the differences which exist between the Lord's supper and the Popish mass, constitute the reasons why the mass is to be abolished. For since the mass has so many things connected with it, which are in direct opposition to the Lord's supper, it must not be confounded with it, nor substituted in the place of it, nor tolerated in the church by godly magistrates; but must be abolished. Before we proceed, however, to point out the differences between the Lord's supper and the Popish mass, it is proper that we should say a few words in reference to the term, *mass*. And first, there are some who derive the word *mass* from the Hebrew *masah*, which signifies a tribute, or voluntary offering. The word has this meaning in Deut. 16: 10, where it is said, "Thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God with a tribute of a free-will offering of thine hand." This offering was so called, being as it were, a yearly tribute, which was given most willingly and cheerfully. It is also understood by some to signify a sufficiency, meaning that so much should be given as might be sufficient, which, perhaps, is the more correct interpretation, since God in Deut. 15: 8, commanded the Israelites to open their hands wide unto the poor, and to lend that which was sufficient for their need. This the Chaldee paraphrast interprets *missah;* from which it is supposed that it is called mass, or missa, as if it were a tribute, and a free-will offering, which should every where be offered to God in the church for the living and the dead. But this is not probable. It is true, indeed, that the church has borrowed some words from the Hebrew; as Satan, sabaoth, hallelujah, &c.; but these and similar words were introduced into the Latin church through the Greek church, and were introduced into the Greek Testament when it was first written in the Greek language; nor have we any Hebrew words in our church which the Greek church had not before. Furthermore, if we examine the writings of the Greek Fathers it will be seen, that the word missa is never used by them; from which we are inclined to believe that the word missa was not derived from the Hebrew.

Therefore the term *missa*, which is doubtless a Latin word, seems to be taken from the Fathers, who used *remissa* for *remissio*. Turtullian says: "*We have spoken of remission* (remissa) *of sins.*" Cyprian says: "*He who was to grant remission of sins, did not disdain to be baptized.*" Again: "*He who blasphemes against the Holy Ghost, obtains no remission of sins.*" Hence, as the Latin Fathers used the term *remissa* for *remissio*, so they also seem to have used *missa* for *missio*, which is derived from *mittendo*. But here again there is a great diversity of sentiment. For some will have it that *missa* is to be understood in the sense of *missio*, from an ancient custom of ecclesiastical rites, which was introduced into the Latin churches from the Greek, that when the sermon and lecture were over, the deacon, before the consecration of the mysteries, sent away or commanded the catechumens, the demoniacs, and such as were excommunicated, to depart, saying, with a loud voice, "*If there be any catechumen still remaining in the church, let him depart;*" so that *missa* seems to be used in the sense of *missio* (sending away), because it was the last

part of divine service. Others suppose that it is called *missa* in the sense of *dismissa*, or *dismissio*, from the manner in which the ecclesiastical assemblies, or congregations, were dismissed; because, when the prayers and other services were ended, the deacon exclaimed, "*Ite, missa est;*" that is, Go, you may depart. Others, again, understand it thus: "Go, now is the collection of alms;" which they say were called *missa*, from being sent, or thrown in for the benefit of the poor. In short, it was that which was transacted in the church after the departure of the catechumens, or the collection of alms. Lombard has a different view of the subject: "*It is called missa*," says he, "*because a heavenly messenger comes for the purpose of consecrating the vivifying body of Christ, according to the prayer of the priest:* Almighty God, command that this be carried by the hand of thy holy angel to the high altar, &c. *Therefore, unless an angel come, it cannot be properly called a mass.*" Lo the folly of the man! Again: "*It is called mass either because the host is sent, of which mention is made in that service, where it is said, Ite, missa est; that is, follow the host which is gone up into heaven,—go after it; or because an angel comes from heaven to consecrate the Lord's body, by whom the host is carried to the heavenly altar; whence it is also said, Ite, missa est.*"

We reject the idea of the mass, and also the term itself, for the reason that it does not belong to the Lord's supper, which has nothing in common with the mass, although some of the ancient writers employed the term. Nor is there any necessity that we should use this term, inasmuch as we have other words which express this mystery in a more striking manner, which are extant in the Scriptures, which call it the Lord's supper, the table of the Lord, the breaking of bread.

We may now, from what has been said, perceive the difference between the Lord's supper and the Popish mass; which difference is so great as to require that the mass be wholly abolished. The Catechism points out three things in which the Lord's supper and the Popish mass chiefly differ from each other:

1. The Lord's supper testifies to us that we have a free pardon of all sin, by the only sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which he himself has once accomplished on the cross, according as it is said: "The bread is the body of Christ, given for us." "The cup is the blood of Christ, shed for you unto the remission of sins." "This do in remembrance of me." "Ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." "This he did once, when he offered up himself." "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "By the which will we are sacrificed through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all." "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, forever sat down on the right hand of God." "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Cor. 11. Heb. 7: 27; 9: 12, 26; 10: 10, 12, 14.)

The mass, on the other hand, teaches that the living and the dead have not the pardon of sins through the sufferings of Christ, unless Christ is also daily offered for them by the priests. Their Canon, which they call the less, thus teaches in reference to this subject: "*Holy Father, Almighty and Eternal God, receive this immaculate host, which I, thine unworthy*

servant, offer unto thee, the living and true God, for my innumerable sins, offences, and neglects, and for all round about me; yea, and for all faithful Christians, living and dead, that it may result in salvation to me and them unto everlasting life." Their greater Canon has the following: "*Remember, O Lord, thy servants and handmaidens N. N., and all round about me, whose faith and acknowledged devotion are known unto thee, for whom we offer unto thee, or who present unto thee this sacrifice of praise for themselves and for all theirs, for the redemption of their souls, for the hope of their salvation and preservation,*" &c. What need was there that Christ should offer himself, if the oblation of a sacrificing priest might avail for the redemption of souls?

2. The Lord's supper testifies to us according to the articles of our faith, that Christ, as to his human nature, is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father, and not concealed under the accidents of the bread and wine; but that he exhibits to us in the Supper his body and blood, to be eaten and drunk by faith, and engrafts us into himself by the Holy Ghost, that we may abide in him, and have him abide in us, as it is said: "He that is joined to the Lord, is one Spirit." "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" "We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest." (1 Cor. 6: 17; 10: 16. Heb. 8: 1, 4.)

The mass teaches, on the other hand, that the bread and wine, by virtue of the consecration, are changed into the body and blood of Christ, and that his body and blood, in the act of consecration, are brought down from heaven; that they are concealed, after a bodily manner, under the forms of bread and wine; that they are really handled by the hands of the minister, carried about, and eaten and received with the mouth by the communicants. These figments of the brain are opposed to the incarnation, the ascension, the intercession, and return of Christ to judgment; all of which are important articles of our faith, and also to the nature of sacraments, in which the signs must necessarily remain, and not lose their nature, as we have already demonstrated.

3. The Lord's supper teaches that Christ is to be worshipped by us in heaven at the right hand of the Father: for it does not overthrow, but establishes the articles of our faith, and the doctrine of the whole gospel, which teaches that Christ is to be sought and worshipped ABOVE. "Seek those things which are ABOVE, WHERE Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." (Col. 3: 1.) Stephen, when he was stoned, saw Christ and worshipped him ABOVE, standing at the right of God. (Acts 7: 55.) The ancient church also sang in her service, or liturgy, SURSUM CORDA HABEMUS AD DOMINUM, we lift up our hearts unto the Lord.

The mass teaches, on the other hand, that Christ is to be worshipped in the bread, which worship is, without doubt, idolatrous. For to worship Christ in the bread, is to direct our worship in soul, mind, thought, and as much as may be, in the motion or gesture of the body, to the place where the bread is, and looking thither, pay homage and reverence to Christ, as though he were there more especially than elsewhere. It was in this way that God was anciently worshipped at the ark, in which worship the mind was not only directed to the ark, but the body was also inclined to it as much as possible. That this is idolatry, may be proven, 1. From this, that

no creature has the power to restrict the worship of God to any thing, or place in which, or at which God has not expressly commanded us to worship him, or in which he has not promised to hear us. From this it is easy to see the cause of the difference, why the Jews, directing their worship to the Mercy Seat, did, nevertheless, at the same time worship the true God in spirit, and were assured by the divine promise of being heard; whilst those who worshipped in Dan and Bethel, and upon the high places, and in the temple of Samaria, were idolaters, worshipping what they knew not. The reason of this is explained more fully in 2 Kings, 17: 9. 2. Because in the New Testament all worship which is tied, or limited to any particular place, is entirely abolished, whilst a spiritual worship is now required of us, kindled by the Holy Ghost, and offered up in true knowledge and faith. Christ himself plainly teaches this, in John 4: 22, 23: "Ye worship, ye know not what; we know what we worship. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." When he says, that we shall *worship in spirit, not in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem*, he abolishes all worship which is restricted to any particular place. Hence we must abolish and hold in abhorrence the wicked device of the corporal presence of Christ in the bread, which is the foundation of the idolatrous worship of the Papists: for as long as Christ's bodily presence in the bread is retained, whether it be by tran, or consubstantiation, so long the Popish worship will remain. For as in former times, before the ascension of Christ into heaven, it was not only lawful, but even necessary to worship Christ in whatever place he was; so now, if he is in the bread, he must be worshipped in the bread, whether we see him or not. Yea, we ought rather to believe the word of God, than any of our senses, if it taught any such thing. But if, on the other hand, we reject the corporal presence of Christ in the bread, we also abolish, by the command of God himself, this shameful worship which the Papists are wont to bestow upon the body of Christ, which they say lies concealed under the forms of bread and wine.

The Ubiquitarians take exception against us here, and say that Christ is in the bread, not to be adored, but to be eaten; neither does he give any command that he should be adored in the bread, but that he should be eaten. This, however, which they assert, is a mere begging of the question, for Christ commanded neither. If he is in the bread it is proper that he should be there worshipped, on account of the general command: "Let all the angels of God worship him." "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God." (Ps. 97: 7. Heb. 1: 6. Deut 6: 13; 10: 20.) They imagine Christ, therefore, to be in the bread, and yet affirm that it is not lawful to worship him. Hence Musculus and others, to solve this difficulty, fall down before the bread, and worship Christ in it. Hesshuss argues against what we have affirmed, in this way: The Divinity, although it is present in all creatures, is, nevertheless, not to be adored in them. Therefore, neither is it necessary that the humanity of Christ should be adored in the bread, although it is corporally present in it. But the cases are different; for the adoration of the Divinity is not restricted to all creatures, but is joined to the humanity which he assumed, as to its own temple. Hence, wherever the humanity of Christ is, there the Divinity will be worshipped in it, and with it, so that the ubiquity of Christ's humanity is entirely overthrown by this argument upon which they are wont to lay so much importance. For

since the humanity of Christ is not to be worshipped in all creatures, and every where, it follows that it is not present every where, in all pears, apples, ropes, cheese, &c., as the Ubiquitarians write in reference to this subject.

These differences were enlarged by the addition of the following particulars, and delivered by Ursinus in the year 1669:

1. The Supper testifies, that the sacrifice of Christ alone justifies; the Popish priests affirm that the mass justifies, according to the work which is done.

2. The Supper teaches that Christ has redeemed us by offering himself for us; the Priests affirm that we are justified by Christ offered by them.

3. The Supper teaches that our salvation is accomplished by the one sacrifice which Christ offered for us upon the cross; the Priests affirm that it is accomplished by the mass being frequently repeated.

4. The Supper teaches that we are engrafted into Christ by means of the Holy Spirit, through faith; the mass deceives when it teaches that Christ enters into us corporally, or that we are engrafted into Christ by his entering into us corporally.

5. The Supper teaches that Christ ascended into heaven, after having accomplished his sacrifice; the mass-mongers will have it that he is upon the altar, as to his body.

6. The bread and wine remain in the Supper, and are not changed as to their substance, because the sacraments retain and do not change the substance of the signs; the mass-mongers teach that the substance of the bread and wine is annihilated, and that the accidents only remain.

7. The design of the Supper is the confirmation of our faith in Christ, and of his only sacrifice; the design of the mass is the confirmation of the opinion concerning works which are done, and a denial of the sacrifice of Christ.

8. The Supper teaches that Christ is to be adored in heaven; the mass-mongers adore him under the forms of bread and wine. These differences prove that the Popish mass is, in fact, nothing else than a denial of the one sacrifice of Christ, and an accursed idolatry.

These differences, moreover, prove that there are many and weighty causes on account of which the Popish mass ought to be suppressed, abolished, and entirely discarded from the church, viz:

1. The Popish mass is a manifold corruption, or rather the abolishing of the whole rite instituted by Christ, that is, of the Lord's supper. For it takes away the cup from the laity, and adds many foolish toys, unknown to the Apostles, and never practiced by the church in her early history; when, nevertheless, no creature has the power of instituting sacraments, or of changing or abolishing their divine constitution.

2. The mass destroys the sign, and the sacrament itself, inasmuch as it changes the sign into the thing signified. It denies that there is any bread and wine present, but declares it to be the flesh and blood of Christ substantially, which is repugnant to the nature of sacraments, which does not allow the substance of the signs to be destroyed, neither does it require any physical connection between the signs and the things signified, and so does not require any transubstantiation or corporal presence in the supper; but doubtless leads us to Christ crucified, and now reigning in heaven, and thence communicating himself unto us.

3. The opinion of merit attaching itself to that which is done, is grounded in the mass: because the priests feign that the mass is a propitiatory sacrifice, which merits, by its own dignity and virtue, the remission of sins, for them, and for others by the work which is done. But this virtue did not even belong to the Mosaic sacrifices. It belongs only to the one sacrifice which the Son of God offered once for us upon the cross, to which the Lord's supper leads and directs us, whilst the mass withdraws and calls the mind away from it. It is true that the Fathers do sometimes call the supper a sacrifice, but they meant a eucharistical, or thanksgiving sacrifice, and not a propitiatory sacrifice, as the Papists maintain. And indeed the supper is that sacrifice which Christ offered, as the bread is that body which he gave for us, which, however, is to be understood sacramentally. These mass-mongers, however, make the mass, not that very same sacrifice which Christ offered, but something different from it; for, say they, it is a sacrifice without blood, by which we obtain the forgiveness of sins. Hence they do in fact deny the sacrifice which Christ offered by the shedding of his blood, when they deny that Christ has perfectly merited the remission of sins, and imagine another sacrifice for sin, although they affirm that they offer no other sacrifice, than that which Christ offered. For it is one thing to offer one sacrifice once, and that sufficient to atone for all sin, which the Scriptures declare to be true of the sacrifice of Christ; and it is another thing for the same sacrifice to be frequently offered which does not agree with the sacrifice of Christ. They contradict themselves when they say, that this sacrifice alone is sufficient for the remission of sins, and this scrifice, with others, is offered for sins.

4. There is another error concealed under this, that they should imagine themselves able to obtain the forgiveness of sins, and the deliverance of souls absent or dead and in purgatory, when the word of God declares, on the contrary, that we shall be clothed in heaven, if we are found clothed and not naked on earth; and that we shall be judged according to the characters which we have when we depart out of this life. Cyprian says, "*When we have once departed this life, there is then no room for repentance, and no effect of satisfaction: here life is either lost or gained; here eternal salvation is obtained by the worship of God, and by the fruit of faith.*"

5. There is also here another error, because they feign that, by the offering of the sacrifice in the mass, they do not only merit the forgiveness of sins, but also other benefits, as the healing of the sick, and of sheep, horses, cattle, swine, &c. They imagine, therefore, that benefits are conferred in the mass of an entirely different character from those promised in the Gospel, and sealed by the sacraments.

6. The mass is opposed to the priesthood of Christ. Christ alone has the power of offering himself. These mass-mongers, however, imagine that the Son of God may be offered, not only by himself, but by others also; and that they offer him unto God the Father, when there is, nevertheless, no creature of such dignity as to be able to offer the Son of God as a sacrifice. The priest is greater and more excellent than the sacrifice. Hence, as they affirm that they are the priests who offer Christ, they exalt themselves above him. To this they are wont to object, saying that they do not slay, but only offer and exhibit the Son to the Father, that he may remit unto us our sins for the sake of Christ, so that they merely in this

way apply that one sacrifice of the Son of God. But that which they affirm is sufficient to convict them of error, *that they offer Christ with their hands*; for it remains that they make themselves the priests who offer the Son of God as a sacrifice, and so exalt themselves above him. Nor does that which they affirm, when they say that they do not slay Christ, avail any thing: for there were many things offered by the priests of old, which they nevertheless did not slay; but only sacrificed, or offered, as cakes, burnt offerings, &c. The Jews slew Christ, but they did not sacrifice him; but Christ was willingly slain, and, therefore sacrificed himself, "Who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God. (Heb. 9: 14.) Christ verily offered himself once a sacrifice to the Father for us. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." "Christ, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, forever sat down on the right hand of God. (Heb. 9: 28; 10: 12.) The Papists now, in opposition to these express declarations of Scripture, will have Christ offered often in the mass. They maintain that they sacrifice him often, but do not slay him. A propitiatory sacrifice, however, cannot be offered without the death of the victim; for, "without the shedding of blood, is no remission."

7. The mass is in conflict with the articles of our faith respecting the true humanity of Christ, his true ascension into heaven, and his return to judgment; for it joins to Christ a body made of bread, and imagines that Christ is concealed corporally under the forms of bread and wine.

8. The Mass is opposed to the communion of saints with Christ: for it devises the horrible figment that Christ's body is made to enter into our bodies, and to remain within us as long as the forms of bread and wine remain undigested. The Supper teaches, on the other hand, that we are members of Christ by the Holy Spirit and are engrafted into him.

9. Finally, the mass is repugnant to the true word of God, because it establishes the idolatrous worship of Christ in the bread, as we have already shown. The Papists restrict or bind the worship of Christ to a thing, to which Christ has not restricted it by any express command; and in this way they declare themselves idolaters, no less than if they were to worship Christ at a wall, or if they were to adore him falling down before a pillar.

From what has now been said, it is evident that the mass is an idol, formed by Anti-Christ out of various accursed errors and blasphemies, and substituted in the place of the Lord's supper, which, for this reason, is properly and necessarily abolished.

Obj. 1. The Mass is an application of the sacrifice of Christ. Therefore it ought not to be abolished. Ans. We deny the antecedent, for the reason that the merits of Christ are applied unto us by faith alone, as it is said, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." (Eph. 3: 17.)

Obj. 2. There must necessarily be a perpetual sacrifice in the church. Isaiah foretold that it should be "from one Sabbath to another"; and Malachi says, "They shall offer a pure offering." (Is. 66: 23. Mal. 1: 11.) Ans. The sacrifices of the Christian church are eucharistical: and it is of such sacrifices that it is here declared that they shall be perpetual and pure. The Fathers call such a sacrifice of thanksgiving eucharistical, 1. Because it is a remembrance of the sacrifice of Christ. 2. Because,

in the primitive church alms, which were a sacrifice, were offered and given to the poor, after the observance of the Lord's supper. But the Fathers never dreamed that the Supper was a propitiatory sacrifice.

Question 81. For whom is the Lord's supper instituted?

Answer. For those who are truly sorrowful for their sins, and yet trust that these are forgiven them for the sake of Christ; and that their remaining infirmities are covered by his passion and death; and who also earnestly desire to have their faith more and more strengthened, and their lives more holy; but hypocrites, and such as turn not to God with sincere hearts, eat and drink judgment to themselves.

EXPOSITION.

There are three things to be explained in the exposition of this Question:

I. *For whom has the Lord's Supper been Instituted?*
II. *What do the wicked receive, if they come to this Supper?*
III. *What is the lawful use of the Supper?*

1. Who ought to come to the Lord's Supper?

The questions who ought to come, and who ought to be admitted to the Supper, are distinct and different. The former speaks of the duty of communicants; the latter of the duty of the church and ministers. The former is more restricted; the latter is broader, and more general: for, as touching the former, none but the godly ought to come to the Supper; whilst, as it respects the latter, not only the godly, but hypocrites also, who are not known to be such, are to be admitted by the church. Hence all that ought to come, ought also to be admitted; but not all who ought to be admitted, ought to come: but only those, 1. Who acknowledge their sins, and are truly sorrowful for them. 2. Who trust that their sins are forgiven them by and for the sake of Christ. 3. Who earnestly desire to have their faith more and more strengthened, and their lives more holy: that is, those only ought to come to the Lord's supper, and they alone are worthy guests of Christ, who live in true faith and repentance. It is in these things that a true examination, in order to a profitable approach to the holy Supper, consists. Paul speaks of this, when he says, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." (2 Cor. 11: 28.) To examine one's self is to see if we have faith and repentance, as it is said, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith, and whether Christ is in you." But how shall a man know that he possesses these things? 1. By having confidence in God, and peace of conscience. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." "Hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us." (Rom. 5: 1, 5.) 2. From the effects of a true faith, or from the beginning of a true obedience, being both internal and external, and from a sincere desire and purpose to obey all the commandments of God. Those who have the consciousness that they possess these things; or, to express it in other words,

those who have faith and repentance, not only in possibility, but actually, ought to come to, and partake of, the Lord's supper. Infants are not capable of coming to the Lord's supper, because they do not possess faith actually, but only potentially and by inclination. But here actual faith is required, which includes a certain knowledge of what God has revealed, and an assured confidence in Christ; it also requires the commencement of a new obedience, and purpose to live godly; and also an examination of ourselves, with a commemoration of the Lord's death.

Hypocrites, and such as have no true faith and repentance, ought not to come to the Lord's supper, 1. Because the sacraments were instituted merely for the faithful, and such as turn to God with sincere hearts, that they might seal unto them the promise of the gospel, and confirm their faith. The word is common both to the converted and the unconverted. It is preached to those who are converted that they may be confirmed thereby; and to the unconverted that they may be converted. The sacraments, however, belong to the faithful alone; and as to the sacrament of the Lord's supper, Christ instituted it in the presence of his disciples alone, as he said, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you." (Luke 22: 15.) We, therefore, conclude from the nature and subject of sacraments as follows: *What God has instituted for his household and children, that hypocrites and aliens from the church ought not to receive.* 2. Paul forbids hypocrites and all wicked persons to come to the Lord's table, in words which admit of no controversy, when he commands, "That every one examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." (1 Cor. 11: 28.) 3. Because, when hypocrites and such as turn not to God with sincere hearts come to the Lord's table, they eat and drink judgment to themselves, and are guilty of the body and blood of Christ. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (1 Cor. 11: 29.) 4. To these considerations we may yet add the general testimony of Scripture, which forbids unbelievers to come to the Lord's supper, and condemns the use of the sacraments on the part of those who are unconverted. "Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother." "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man." "If thou be a breaker of the law thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." (Matt. 5: 24. Is. 66: 3. Rom. 2: 25.)

Obj. But God commands all to observe the sacraments, and Christ says, "Take, drink ye all of this." Therefore, the ungodly do not sin by coming to the Lord's table. Ans. We reply to the antecedent that God does, indeed, command all to observe the sacraments; but then he requires that they be used lawfully, to do which there must be faith and repentance. God commands all to be baptized, and to observe the supper: but he also commands them to repent and believe. "Repent and be baptized." "Let a man examine himself." (Acts 2: 38. 1 Cor. 11: 28.)

Obj. 2. We are all unworthy. Therefore, none ought to come to the Lord's table. Ans. We reply to the antecedent, that we are all unworthy by nature, and in ourselves; but we are made worthy by the grace of Christ, if we come with faith and a good conscience. Augustin says: "*Come with boldness; it is bread and not poison.*" No one ought, therefore, to absent himself because of his unworthiness, seeing that all who come with faith and penitence are counted worthy guests. "To this man

will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Is. 66: 2.)

Obj. 3. Those who keep from profaning the supper act properly. Those now who stay away from the Lord's table on account of being at enmity with some one, and for other sins, keep from profaning the supper. Therefore, their conduct is such as is right and proper. Ans. We reply to the major proposition by making a distinction: Those who keep from profaning the Lord's table act properly, if they keep from it in such a way as they ought, viz: by repenting of those sins which render them unworthy; but they act unwisely and wickedly, who, when they absent themselves from the Lord's table, continue in sin, hypocrisy, and a state of enmity with their neighbor, for they add sin to sin, and contempt to profanation. We must not do evil, that good may come.

II. What do the Wicked receive in the use of the Lord's Supper?

Hypocrites, and such as turn not to God with sincere hearts coming to the Lord's supper, receive not the things signified, viz: the body and blood of Christ, but the naked signs of bread and wine, and these to their condemnation. This is proven,

1. *From the definition of eating.* To eat Christ is to be made a partaker of the substance, merit, efficacy and of all the benefits of Christ, as it is said, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him; even he shall live by me." (John 6: 56, 57.) But the wicked and unbelieving are not made partakers of Christ. Therefore, they do not eat Christ.

2. *From the manner and means of eating.* Christ's body is eaten by faith alone, because we receive him with all his benefits by faith only. The body of Christ is the food of the soul and not of the belly, of the heart and not of the mouth, as it is correctly expressed in Luther's catechism: "*These words*, FOR YOU, *require believing hearts.*" But the ungodly and hypocrites have no faith. Therefore, they do not receive the body of Christ.

3. Christ offers his body in the supper, to be eaten by them alone for whom he offered himself upon the cross. But he offered himself upon the cross only for those that believe, and not for the ungodly or for hypocrites. "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." "This is my body which is given for you." (John 17: 9. Luke 22: 19.)

4. The body of Christ is the vivifying bread, which, whosoever receives, receives life at the same time; for Christ's Spirit is not separate from his body. "He that eateth my flesh dwelleth in me, and I in him." (John 6: 56.) But the ungodly in receiving the signs do not receive life. Therefore, they receive the signs without the things signified.

5. The ungodly eat and drink judgment to themselves. Therefore, they do not eat and drink the body and blood of Christ. This argument is of force according to the rule of contraries. For to eat judgment to themselves is, through unbelief and abuse of the sacraments, to be driven from Christ and separated from him and all his benefits; or, it is grievously to offend God by abusing the sacraments by receiving them without faith and repentance, and so to bring upon themselves temporal and eternal punishment

if they do not repent. To eat Christ, on the contrary, is to be made a partaker of Christ and of all his benefits by faith; for no one can eat Christ, and yet not be made at the same time a partaker of his merit, efficacy and benefits. Hence, no one can at the same time eat Christ, and also condemnation to himself.

6. When Paul says, 1 Cor. 10: 21, "Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils," he affirms that there is something in the Lord's supper of which the ungodly cannot partake. But they do partake of the signs of bread and wine at the Lord's table. Therefore, he excludes them from a participation in the body and blood of Christ, the things signified in the supper. To this it is objected that when the Apostle says *ye cannot*, he means ye cannot partake with a good conscience, and unto salvation. But this is a false gloss; because the Apostle does not reason from what is unprofitable, but from what is impossible. Ye ought not to partake with them that sacrifice to idols. Why? Because this is to partake with devils. But it is impossible that ye should at the same time be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils; because it is impossible to serve two masters at the same time, as Christ says, "No man can serve two masters. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." (Matt. 6: 24.) It is in the same sense that the Apostle here says, "Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils."

7. Christ says, (Matt. 15: 26,) "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs." The body of Christ is the children's bread, that is, it is the bread of the faithful. Therefore Christ does not cast his body to dogs, meaning the wicked, contrary to his own doctrine. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine," &c. (Matt. 7: 6.)

8. From the authority of the Fathers, who taught the same thing in reference to this subject. See Augustin lib. 21, cap. 25, de civit. Dei., and in Johan. tract. 26, and 59, and in sent. Prosperi cap. 3, 39. Ambrose says of the Supper: "*Although the sacraments suffer themselves to be taken or handled by those who are unworthy, yet those persons cannot be partakers of the Spirit, whose unbelief or unworthiness contradicts so great holiness.*" And a little farther on he says: "*And as for those who are present at these sacred mysteries with cold hearts and souls, and who even partake of these gifts, they do indeed lick the rock, but they neither suck any honey or oil from it; because they are not enlivened by any sweetness of charity, nor by the sanctity of the Holy Spirit: they neither judge themselves, nor make any distinction in regard to the sacraments, but use these holy gifts without any reverence, as if they were common food, and impudently push themselves to the Lord's table with unclean garments, for whom it had been better if they had been cast into the sea with a mill-stone tied about their neck, than to receive with their unclean consciences one morsel at the hands of the Lord, who even to this day creates, sanctifies, blesses and distributes to godly receivers his most true and holy body.*"

The reasons, on account of which unbelievers, and such as are ungodly bring upon themselves condemnation by eating and drinking, are, 1. Because they profane the signs, and by consequence the thing signified, by taking to themselves those things which were not instituted for them, but for the disciples of Christ alone. 2. Because they profane the covenant of God, by taking to themselves the signs of the covenant. They desire to

appear in covenant with God, when in fact they are in league with the devil and not with God, whom they endeavor, as far as they can, to make the Father of the wicked. 3. Because they do not discern the Lord's body, and trample his blood under their feet. God does, indeed, offer his benefits to them, but they do not receive them by faith, and so mock God, whilst they profess to receive the benefits of Christ, inasmuch as they neither do, nor will any thing less, and thus they add this new offence to their other sins. 4. Because they condemn themselves by their own judgment; for in coming to the Lord's table they profess that they approve of this doctrine, and that they believe that there is no salvation out of Christ. And yet, in the meanwhile, they are conscious that they are hypocrites, and so condemn themselves.

Those, therefore, who argue that if the ungodly eat to themselves condemnation, they must eat the body of Christ, reason falsely. Yea, it may be said that the contrary is rather true; for if they eat to themselves condemnation, they do not eat the body of Christ. For *to eat Christ and to eat condemnation* are contraries, which cannot hold true at the same time. But, say our opponents, they eat unworthily; therefore they nevertheless eat. We grant that they do indeed eat; but they merely eat bread, and not the body of Christ; for it is expressly said, *Whosoever shall eat this bread unworthily.* But, say they again, Christ is not only a saviour, but also a judge; to which we reply, that he is not a judge of those by whom he is eaten, but of those by whom he is despised; for it is said of them that eat, "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me." (John 6: 57.) And of those that despise Christ, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7: 23.) As the gospel is the savour of life unto life when it is believed, and is the savour of death unto death when it is despised, so Christ, when he is eaten, quickeneth, and when he is despised, judgeth. Christ now is despised, when he is offered to the unbelieving in the word and sacraments, and is rejected by their unbelief. But it is still further objected: The ungodly are guilty of the body of Christ; and therefore must eat it. But the cause of their guilt is not the eating of Christ, but the eating of the bread without Christ; because it is said, *Whosoever shall eat of this bread unworthily*, &c. An abuse of the sign is a contempt cast upon Christ himself; as an injury done to the charter or seal of a king is an injury done to the king himself, and is an offence against his injured majesty. But how, it is asked, can the ungodly eat judgment to themselves, and be guilty, when it is a good work to receive the sacraments? We reply, that the receiving of the sacraments is in itself a good work, and when it is accompanied with the true and lawful use thereof; otherwise it is a work which God does not command, but forbids, as he himself says: "He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man," &c. (Is. 66: 3.) So Paul says: "This is not to eat the Lord's supper," &c. "If thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." (1 Cor. 11: 20. Rom. 2: 25.) If this were not true, we might thus conclude: The receiving of the body of Christ is a good work; therefore the ungodly cannot by this receiving be guilty of the body of Christ.

III. What is the lawful use of the Lord's Supper?

The lawful use of the Supper is, when the faithful receive in the church the bread and cup of the Lord, and show his death, so that this receiving

may be a pledge of their union with Christ, and an application of the whole benefit of our redemption and salvation. It consists in these three things:

1. In retaining and observing the rites and ceremonies instituted by Christ. This, too, must be done, not ludicrously, nor by one person privately, but in a regular assembly of the church, whether great or small. The rites which Christ has instituted are, that the Lord's bread be broken, distributed and received, and the Lord's cup be given to all the communicants, in remembrance of his death. 2. When the rites are observed by those persons for whom they were instituted by Christ; that is, when the bread and wine are received by those whom Christ designed should receive them; which persons are not his enemies, but his disciples — the faithful. The observance of these rites without faith and repentance, is not the use, but the abuse of them. 3. When the supper is received, and the whole transaction is directed to the end for which it was instituted by Christ, viz: in remembrance of the Lord's death, which is for the confirmation of our faith, and the rendering of true gratitude.

Question 82. Are they also to be admitted to this supper, who, by confession and life, declare themselves infidels and ungodly?

Answer. No; for by this the covenant of God would be profaned, and his wrath kindled against the whole congregation; therefore it is the duty of the Christian church, according to the appointment of Christ and his apostles, to exclude such persons by the keys of the kingdom of heaven, until they show amendment of life.

EXPOSITION.

They are to be admitted to the Lord's supper by the church,

1. Who are of a proper age to examine themselves, and to commemorate the Lord's death, according to the command: "This do ye in remembrance of me." "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread." "Ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (1 Cor. 11: 25, 26, 28.) The infant children of the church are, therefore, not admitted to the use of the Lord's supper, even though they are included among the number of the faithful.

2. Those who are baptized, and who by baptism are made members of the church. The covenant entered into with God in baptism, is renewed in the observance of the Lord's supper. It was for this reason that none, except those who were first circumcised, were permitted to eat the passover. Therefore, Turks, Jews and all other aliens from the church are to be debarred from the use of the supper.

3. Those who profess true repentance and faith in word and in deed, or who exhibit a profession of faith and repentance in their deportment, whether it be made truly and sincerely, or by secret hypocrisy. The church is not to judge in regard to that which is secret and hidden. It, therefore, admits all whom it judges to be members of Christ, that is, all whom it hears and sees professing repentance and faith by confession, and the external deportment of the life, whether they be truly pious, or hypocrites whose true character is not yet known.

Those, however, are not to be admitted to the Lord's table, who simply declare that they believe all these things, whilst they continue to lead ungodly and sinful lives; for he that says he believes, and yet has not the fruits of faith, lies, and denies in deed what he affirms in words, according to the declaration of the Apostle, where he says: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him; being abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Tit. 1: 16.) So the apostle James declares, 2: 20. "That faith without works is dead."

The reasons why only those are to be admitted to the Lord's supper, who by confession and life profess repentance and faith, are:

1. Because the church would profane the covenant of God, if it were to admit to the holy communion the unbelieving and impenitent; for he that does a thing, and he that consents to it are regarded in the same light by the law. To profane the covenant of God, is to commend and recognise those as the confederates, or friends of God, who are his enemies, and to represent God as such an one, as is in league with hypocrites and wicked men. There are two ways in which the covenant of God is profaned. The one is by administering the signs of the covenant to those, to whom God promises nothing; the other is by using the signs without repentance and faith. For they do not only profane the covenant of God, who take to themselves the signs of the covenant, whilst they are impenitent, but those also, who knowingly and willingly administer the signs to such persons as God has excluded from his covenant. Those, therefore, who give the signs of the covenant to the ungodly, make God the friend of the wicked, and make the children of the devil the children of God.

2. If the church were to admit to the Lord's supper, knowingly and willingly those who by confession and life, declare themselves infidels and ungodly, the wrath of God would be kindled against the whole congregation. And that the wrath of God is in this way kindled against the church, the apostle Paul clearly affirms when he says: "For this cause many are weak, and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." (1 Cor. 11: 30, 31.) God is, therefore, angry with those who consent to, or connive at the profanation of this sacrament and punishes them, because he punishes the wicked who were admitted by their consent; for the Lord's supper is equally profaned by both.

3. Christ has given command not to admit such as are ungodly at his table. If any one denies the existence of such a command in reference to the Lord's supper, the sense, or substance of it may easily be proven, since Christ instituted his supper for his disciples, and for them alone, as may be inferred from what he said: "With desire, I have desired to eat this Passover *with you*." "Take this, and divide it *among yourselves*." "This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed *for you*." (Luke 22: 15, 17, 19.) The Lord's supper was, therefore, instituted for the disciples of Christ alone, and so the command, *Take this, &c.*, pertains to them. All others, for whom Christ has not died, are excluded. To these reasons we may add the following,

4. Clear and forcible demonstration: Those who deny the faith, are not to be regarded as members of the church, no not even of the visible church. All those now who refuse to repent, deny the faith according to what the Apostle says: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him; being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good

work reprobate." (Tit. 1 : 16.) Therefore, those who refuse to repent are not to be regarded even as members of the visible church, and so are not to be admitted to the sacraments of the church, but should be excluded from them as aliens, so long as they continue to lead impenitent and ungodly lives. As for those hypocrites, however, whose true character is not known by the church, they are to be admitted to the Lord's supper with the godly, as those who by confession and life profess repentance and faith. Yet none should come, except such as truly believe; for all others, including even those hypocrites whose true character is not known by men, eat and drink judgment to themselves, and profane the Lord's supper.

Obj. The church does not profane the covenant of God by admitting hypocrites to the Lord's supper. Therefore, it does not profane it by admitting those who are known to be impenitent. We reply to the antecedent as follows: The church does not do wrong by admitting hypocrites, that is such as are not known to be hypocrites; because it is compelled to acknowledge them as sincere in view of the confession which they have made of their faith, and the repentance which they have feigned. But if the church were knowingly and willingly to admit known and avowed hypocrites, or such as deny repentance and faith, both in word and deed, it would do wrong. To this it is objected: But there are many impenitent persons who intrude themselves, and profane the covenant, especially where the proper discipline of the church is not maintained, and yet the church does no wrong in admitting them. Therefore, it is not wrong that other persons denying repentance should be admitted to the Lord's table. Ans. The church in this case does no wrong, not because it is no sin to admit such as are impenitent, but because it admits them ignorantly — not knowing that they are such. But the impenitent who push themselves forward to the Lord's table, profane the covenant, not to the condemnation of the church, or of those who commune with them, but to their own guilt; for they by so doing bring judgment upon themselves. Yet the church should carefully observe and inquire into the character of those who are admitted to the Lord's table, and the minister, where excommunication, or church disciple is not exercised, is excused, if he does not willingly administer the supper to those who abuse it, and if he is instant in admonishing and reproving them, and if he desires them to avoid these abuses; for "blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." But the sin will rest upon others, viz: upon those who abuse the sacraments, and who connive at these things.

Theses concerning the Lord's Supper.

1. The other sacrament of the New Testament is called the *Lord's Supper*, not because it should be celebrated in the evening, or at the time of supper, but because it was instituted by Christ when he observed the last supper with his disciples before his death. It is called the *Lord's table*, because Christ feeds us in its proper use. It is called the *sacrament* of the body and blood of Christ, because the body and blood of Christ are communicated to us in it. It is called the *eucharist*, because there is in it a solemn thanksgiving for the death and benefits of Christ. It is called a *covenant*, because it should be celebrated in the public assemblies of the church. It is also called by the Fathers *a sacrifice*, because it is a

representation of the propitiatory sacrifice which Christ accomplished upon the cross, and because it is a sacrafice of thanksgiving.

2. The Lord's supper is a sacrament of the New Testament, in which, according to the command of Christ, bread and wine are distributed in the assembly of the faithful, and received in rememberance of Christ; or that Christ may testify to us, that he feeds us unto eternal life by his body and blood broken and shed for us, and that we may return thanks to him for his benefits.

3. The first and chief design or use of the Lord's supper is, that Christ may declare to us that he died for us, and feeds us with his body and blood unto everlasting life, that he may, by this declaration, establish and increase our faith, and so by consequence this spiritual food in us. The second end is the giving of thanks for these benefits of Christ, and a public and solemn profession of our duty to him. The third, is to distin guish the church from all other religions. The fourth, that it may be a bond of mutual love. The fifth, that it may be a bond of the public assemblies of the church.

4. The first end of this sacrament which is a confirmation of our faith in Christ, the Lord's supper has, because Christ himself gives this bread and wine by the hand of the minister in remembrance of himself; that is, that he may admonish us by this symbol, as by his visible word, that he died for us, and that he is to us the bread of everlasting life, whilst he makes us his members; and because he has added to this rite the promise that he will feed those who eat this bread in remembrance of him, with his own body and blood, when he says, *This is my body*; and because the Holy Spirit by this visible testimony influences the minds and hearts of the faithful to believe with stronger confidence the promise of the gospel.

5. There is, therefore, a double meat and drink in the Lord's supper—one external, visible and earthly, which is the bread and wine; the other is internal. There is also a double eating and receiving—the one external, and signifying which is the corporal receiving of the bread and wine, accomplished by the hands, mouth and senses; the other internal, invisible and signified, which is the fruition of Christ's death, and a spiritual ingrafting into his body, accomplished not with the hands and mouth, but by the Spirit and faith. There is, finally, a double dispenser of this meat and drink—the external of the external, which is the minister of the church, giving to us with his hand the bread and wine; the internal of the internal, which is Christ himself, feeding us with his body and blood.

6. The signs which serve for the confirmation of our faith are bread and wine, and not the body and blood of Christ; for the body and blood of Christ are received, that we may live for ever; whilst the bread and wine are taken, that we may be confirmed in regard to that heavenly food, and enjoy it more and more.

7. The bread is not changed into the body of Christ, nor is the wine changed into the blood of Christ; nor are the bread and wine abolished to give place to the body and blood of Christ; nor is the body of Christ substantially present in the bread, or under the bread, or where the bread is; but the Holy Ghost employs this symbol in the right use of the Lord's supper, as a means for the purpose of stirring up our faith, by which he more and more dwells in us, inserts us into Christ, and brings it to pass that we are justified through him, and draw from him everlasting life.

8. When Christ says, *This*, that is, This bread is my body, and This cup is my blood, the form of speech is sacramental, or metonymical, so that the name of the thing signified is attributed to the sign, to teach that the bread is the sacrament, or symbol of his body, that it represents him and declares that the body of Christ was offered for us upon the cross, and is given unto us as the bread of everlasting life, and is, therefore, the means which the Holy Ghost employs for preserving and increasing this food in us, as Paul says, *The bread is the communion of the body of Christ*, by which it is meant, that the bread is the thing by which we are made partakers of Christ's body; and in another place, *We have all been made to drink into one Spirit.* The same thing is also taught when it is said, that the bread is called the body of Christ on account of the resemblance which there is between the sign and the thing signified, viz, that the body of Christ nourishes the spiritual life of the believer, as bread supports our natural life; and on account of the certain joint-reception of the sign and the thing signified in the lawful use of the sacrament. This, too, is the sacramental union of the bread, which is indicated by the sacramental mode of speaking, common in relation to this subject, which is no local conjunction as some imagine.

9. As the body of Christ is, therefore, both his natural and sacramental body, which is the bread of the eucharist; so the eating of the body of Christ is two-fold: the one sacramental of the sign, viz, the external and corporal receiving of the bread and wine; the other real, or spiritual, which is the receiving of the very body of Christ. To believe, too, in Christ dwelling in us by faith, is to be ingrafted by the power of the Holy Spirit into his body, as members to the head, and branches to the vine, and so to be made partakers of the benefits of the life and death of Christ. It is, therefore, evident that those who thus teach, are falsely accused and represented, when it is said that they make the supper consist in the bare signs, or in a participation of the merits of Christ alone, or of his benefits, or of the Holy Spirit, whilst they exclude the true, real, and spiritual communion of the body of Christ itself.

10. The lawful use of the supper consists in this, that the faithful observe this rite instituted by Christ in remembrance of him, or for the purpose of stirring up their faith and gratitude.

11. As the body of Christ is eaten sacramentally in the right use of the supper, so without this use, as in the case of unbelievers and hypocrites, it is sacramentally eaten, but not really; that is, the sacramental symbols or signs, which are the bread and wine, are, indeed, received, but not the things which the sacraments signify, viz, the body and blood of Christ.

12. This doctrine of the Lord's supper is based upon many and most solid arguments. It is confirmed by all those passages which speak of the Lord's supper. Christ, too, calling the visible and broken bread, and not something invisible in the bread, his body which was given, or broken for us, which, as it cannot be understood properly or literally, himself adds the declaration, that that bread is truly received in remembrance of him, which is as if he had said, that the bread is a sacrament of his body. He also says, that the supper is the New Testament, which is spiritual, one and everlasting. Paul, in like manner, says, that it is the communion of the body and blood of Christ, because all the faithful are one body in Christ, who can have no fellowship or communion with devils. This same apostle also

makes the same ingrafting into Christ by one Spirit in baptism and the holy supper. The same thing is confirmed by the entire doctrine and nature of sacraments, which exhibit to the eyes the same spiritual communion of Christ to be received by faith, which the word, or promises of the gospel declare to the ear. It is for this reason that the signs are called by the names of the things signified, and have the reception of the things themselves joined with them in the lawful use of the sacraments. The articles of our common faith establish the same thing, which teach that the body of Christ is a true human body, not present in many places at the same time, but is now placed in heaven to remain there until the Lord come to judge the quick and the dead; and that the communion of saints with Christ is effected by the Holy Spirit, and not by an interpenetration of the body of Christ into the bodies of men; and is, therefore, the doctrine which has been held and professed with great agreement by the whole church in her earlier and purer days.

The Lord's supper differs from baptism, 1. In the rite and manner of signification. The dipping or washing in baptism signifies the remission and removal of sin by the blood and Spirit of Christ, and our fellowship with Christ in his afflictions and glorification; the distribution of the bread and wine signifies the death of Christ to be laid to our account for the remission of sins, and our ingrafting into Christ, so as to be made his members. 2. They differ in their operation. Baptism is the testimony of our regeneration, of the covenant made with God, and of our reception into the church; the Lord's supper testifies that we are to be perpetually nourished by Christ dwelling in us, and that the covenant once entered into between God and us shall ever be ratified in regard to us, so that we shall forever remain united with the church and body of Christ. 3. They differ as it respects the persons to whom they should be administered. Baptism is administered to all who are to be regarded members of the church, whether they be adults or infants; the Lord's supper is to be given to none except those who are able to understand and celebrate the benefits of Christ, and to examine themselves. 4. Baptism is to be received but once, because the covenant once entered into with God is always ratified in the case of those who repent; the Lord's supper is to be often received, inasmuch as it is necessary for our faith that we frequently renew that covenant and call it to mind. 5. They differ in the order which is to be observed. Baptism precedes the Lord's supper; the Lord's supper should be given to none except those who are baptized.

14. Those who examine themselves, and who are possessed of true faith and repentance, are worthy guests at the Lord's table. Those who have not this testimony within themselves, ought not to approach the Lord's table, lest they eat and drink judgment to themselves; nor should they defer that repentance which is necessary in order that they may come, and so bring upon themselves hardness of heart and everlasting punishment.

15. The church ought to admit to the Lord's supper all those who profess to receive the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, and who have a purpose to live in conformity thereto; but should exclude all those who are unwilling to abandon their errors, blasphemies, or sins, when they are properly admonished by the church, and convicted of their errors and sins.

16. The Pope is guilty of corrupting the sacrament of the Lord's supper, in that he has removed from it the breaking of the bread, and refuses the cup to the laity. He is also guilty of the same thing in having changed the Lord's supper, by the addition of so many ceremonies not delivered by the Apostles, into a theatrical mass. These innovations, however, are still more wicked and idolatrous: That the mass is a propitiatory sacrifice, in which Christ is offered to the Father, by the sacrificing priests, for the living and the dead, and is, by virtue of the act of consecration, substantially present, and remains as long as the forms of bread and wine continue uncorrupted; that the mass confers the grace of God and other benefits upon those for whom it is offered; that Christ is eaten orally, even though those who approach the Lord's table are destitute of any good desires or purposes; and that he is concealed and carried under the forms of bread and wine for the purpose of being adored. In view of these base corruptions, the mass ought to be abolished in all Christian churches. These corruptions may be included under these heads: 1. Transubstantiation. 2. The worship of bread. 3. Making a sacrifice out of the Lord's supper. 4. Mutilating the Lord's supper by various human devices.

Certain principal arguments of the Consubstantialists against the sincere doctrines of the Lord's Supper, and those whom they call Sacramentarians; with a refutation of them.

The errors of the Sacramentarians, say they, are these: 1. That they make the Lord's supper consist merely in naked signs and symbols. Ans. We teach that the things signified are, together with the signs, exhibited and communicated in the lawful use of the supper, although not corporally, but in a manner corresponding to sacraments. 2. The Sacramentarians, say they, hold that Christ is present in the supper only according to his efficacy. Ans. We teach that Christ is present, and that he is united to us by the Holy Spirit, although his body is at a great distance from us, just as whole Christ is present in the ministry, although differently, according to the one nature. 3. We, say they, believe that an imaginary, figurative and spiritual body of Christ is present in the supper, and not his true, essential body. Ans. We have never spoken of an imaginary body, but of the true flesh of Christ, which is present with us, although it remains in heaven. We teach, moreover, that we receive the bread and body, but in a manner peculiar to each. 4. We, say they, hold that the true body of Christ which hung upon the cross, and his blood which was shed for us, is distributed, and that it is spiritually received only by those who are worthy guests, whilst such as are unworthy receive nothing but the bare signs, and these to their condemnation. Ans. We admit the whole as being in accordance with the word of God, with the nature of the sacraments, with the analogy of faith, and with the communion of the faithful with Christ.

The general points in which the Churches, which profess the Gospel, agree and differ in the controversy respecting the Lord's Supper.

They agree in these particulars: 1. That the Lord's supper, as well as baptism, is a visible pledge and testimony annexed by Christ himself to

the promise of grace, chiefly to this end: that he may confirm and strengthen our faith in this promise. 2. That in the true use of the supper, as well as in all other sacraments, two things are given of God, and secured by us, viz: earthly, external and visible signs, as the bread and wine; and heavenly, internal and invisible gifts, as the true body of Christ, with all his gifts, benefits and heavenly treasures. 3. That in the supper we are made partakers not only of the Spirit of Christ, and his satisfaction, righteousness, virtue, and operation, but also of the very substance and essence of his true body and blood, given for us upon the cross, and shed for us, and that we are fed with the same unto eternal life; and that Christ declares and makes this known unto us by this visible reception of bread and wine in the supper. 4. That the bread and wine are not changed into the flesh and blood of Christ, but remain true and natural bread and wine —that the body and blood of Christ are not enclosed in the bread and wine; and, therefore, the bread and wine are called the body of Christ—his body and blood in this sense; that his body and blood are not only signified by these, and set before our eyes, but also because as often as we eat or drink this bread and wine, in the true and lawful use, Christ himself gives us his body and blood to be the meat and drink of eternal life. 5. That without the lawful use, the taking of bread and wine is no sacrament, being nothing more than a vain, empty ceremony and spectacle, such as men abuse to their condemnation. 6. That there is no other lawful use of the supper, except that which Christ instituted and commanded to be observed, viz: that which is in remembrance of him, and which declares his death. 7. That Christ does not command a hypocritical remembrance of himself, and declaration of his death; but such as embraces his sufferings and death, and all the benefits which he has obtained by these in our behalf, by a true faith and with sincere thankfulness. 8. That Christ will dwell in none but such as believe, and in them also who, not through contempt, but through necessity, cannot come to the Lord's supper; yea, in all believers, from the beginning of the world to all eternity, even as well, and in the same manner, as he will dwell in them who have observed the Lord's supper.

They disagree in these particulars: 1. That one class contends that the words of Christ, *This is my body*, must be understood literally, which they, however, do not prove; others, again, hold that these words are to be understood sacramentally, according to the declaration of Christ and Paul, and according to the rule by which we are to judge of the truth of any article of our faith. 2. The former class of persons will have the body and blood of Christ essentially present *in* or *with* the bread and wine, and so to be eaten, that together with the bread and wine received from the hands of the minister, it enters by the mouth of those who receive them into their bodies; the other class of persons believe that the body of Christ, which in the celebration of the first supper sat at the table with the disciples, now is, and will continue, not on earth but in heaven, until Christ shall come again to judge the quick and the dead, and yet that we who are on earth notwithstanding, as often as we eat this bread with a true faith are so fed with his body and made to drink of his blood, that we are not only cleansed from our sins through his sufferings and shed blood, but are, also, so united to him and incorporated into his true, essential, human body, by his Spirit dwelling both in him and in us, that we are flesh of his flesh

and bone of his bone; and are more firmly and closely united to him, than the members of our body are united with our head, so that we draw and have in, and from him, everlasting life. 3. The first class of persons referred to maintain, that all who come to the Lord's supper and eat and drink of the bread and wine, whether believers or unbelievers, eat and drink corporally, and with their bodily mouth the flesh and blood of Christ, believers to life and salvation, and unbelievers to damnation and death. The other class of persons believe that unbelievers abuse, indeed, the outward signs to their condemnation, whilst none but the faithful eat and drink by a true faith, and by the Spirit, the body and blood of Christ unto eternal life. [This last paragraph is inserted with slight alterations from the old English translation by Parry.]

OF THE PASSOVER.

As the Lord's supper has been substituted in the place of the Passover, of which mention has been made, it is proper that we should here introduce some remarks in reference to the passover. The principal things in reference to the passover are included in the following questions:

I. *What was the Passover?*
II. *What was its design or use?*
III. *What are the points of resemblance between the Paschal Lamb and Christ?*
IV. *Has it been abolished, and what has succeeded it?*

I. What was the Passover?

The Passover was the solemn eating of a lamb, which God enjoined upon the Israelites in order, that this rite being annually observed in every family, might be a memorial to them of their deliverance from Egypt, and that it might especially declare to the faithful their spiritual deliverance from sin and death by Christ, who was to be slain upon the cross, and to be eaten by faith. Or, it was a sacrament of the ancient church, which was to be celebrated according to the command of God in every family of the Jews, by the yearly slaying and eating of a lamb a year old, that it might be a memorial to them of the great benefit of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and that it might also be a seal of the promise of grace touching the forgiveness of sins on account of the sacrifice of the Messiah. The Greek πάσχα is derived from the Hebrew *pesach*, which means *a passover*, derived from *pasach*, which signifies to *pass over*. This sacrament and feast was so called from the passing over of the angel, who seeing the blood of the lamb sprinkled upon the upper door post of the Israelites, passed over, and spared their first born, whilst he slew all the first born of the Egyptians. The history of the institution of the passover is contained in the twelfth chapter of the book of Exodus. God commanded that the slaying of the lamb should be accompanied with certain and various rites. The lamb had to be a year old; a male without blemish; it had to be separated from the flock by the family on the tenth day of the first month called Nisan, or Abib; it was to be slain four days after, or in the evening of the fourteenth day of the same month; the blood was to be sprinkled upon the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses of the

Jews; then it was to be roasted with fire, and eaten whole, and in haste, with unleaven bread and bitter herbs. Those that ate it, stood with their loins girt, their shoes on their feet, and with their staff in hand. Of this rite the Lord said, "It is the Lord's passover." "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses, where you are, that when I see the blood I may pass over you." (Ex. 12: 11, 13.)

This feast God commanded the Jews to celebrate with great solemnity every year, at which time seven days were devoted to its observance. "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord, throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever. Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread," &c. (Ex. 12: 14, 15; see also Ex. 12: 17, 18; 23: 15. Levit. 25: 5. Deut. 16: 1.)

II. What was the design of the Passover?

There are five ends specified in the twelfth chapter of Exodus, on account of which the Passover was instituted.

1. That the blood of the lamb sprinkled upon the door posts might be a sign of the angel passing over them, and of the preservation of their first-born. "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are, and when I see the blood I will pass over you." (Ex. 12: 13.) This end, after the first performance of the rite, and the passing over of the angel, ceases, although the analogy of it remains for ever: for God formerly spared, and now spares the faithful for the sake of the blood of Christ; by which we mean that he remits their sins, as is taught in the next object specified.

2. That it might be a type of the sacrifice of the Messiah yet to be offered, or that it might be a sign of the deliverance which would be wrought out by Christ, and so be a sign of God's grace to the church. This was the chief end of the yearly passover. This is proven by the following arguments. "A bone of him shall not be broken." (John 19: 36.) This type John declares was fulfilled when Christ's bones were not broken upon the cross. Therefore the lamb was a type of Christ, and of his sacrifice. Again: "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." (1 Cor. 5: 7.) The paschal lamb, therefore, signified Christ, and the sacrificing of it, signified the sacrificing of Christ. Again: the church understood the signification of other sacrifices, that they were types of the sacrifice of the Messiah; for the ancient fathers were not so destitute of reason as to seek the remission of sins by the blood of bulls: much more therefore did they, by faith, behold in the paschal lamb the Messiah, and his sacrifice. Lastly, John calls Christ "the Lamb of God;" and "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" (John 3: 29. Rev. 13: 8;) because he was adumbrated by that lamb which was slain at the Passover.

3. That it might be a memorial of the first Passover, and deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. God desired that the remembrance of such a great benefit should be preserved among his people, lest their posterity might become ungrateful. "Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; (for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste) that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life." (Deut. 16: 3.)

4. That it might be a bond which would unite public assemblies, and perpetuate the ecclesiastical ministry. "And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation," &c.

5. That it might be a sacrament which would distinguish the people of God from all other nations. "There shall no stranger eat thereof." "And when a stranger shall sojourn with you, and will keep the passover of the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near, and keep it, and he shall be as one that is born in the land; for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof." (Ex. 12: 43, 48.)

III. WHAT ARE THE POINTS OF RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN THE PASCHAL LAMB AND CHRIST?

A consideration of the resemblances between the rites which God commanded to be observed in regard to the Paschal Lamb, and Christ, contributes very much to the confirmation, and illustration of the chief end of the Passover.

A comparison between the Type and the Thing signified.

THE TYPE WAS,	THE THING SIGNIFIED IS,
1. A lamb from the flock	1. Christ a true man. Is. 53: 2, 3, and John 1: 14.
2. Without blemish, set apart	2. Without sin. Is. 53: 5, 7, 8. Heb. 7: 26.
3. To be slain and roasted.	3. Who suffered and died. 1 Cor. 5: 7.
4. No bone was broken.	4. He died without having his bones broken. John 19: 36.
5. Was slain in the evening.	5. In the end of the world. Heb. 1: 2; 9: 26.
6. The posts were to be sprinkled with blood,	6. His satisfaction is imputed unto us. Is. 53: 5. Rom. 3: 24.
7. That the destroyer might pass over the houses of the Israelites.	7. That we might be delivered from eternal death. Heb. 2: 14.
8. It was to be eaten, and that in every family.	8. There must be an application of Christ to every one by faith. Rom. 1: 17. John 6: 47.
9. It was all to be eaten.	9. According to all the articles of our faith. Tim. 3: 16.
10. Without leavened bread.	10. Without hypocrisy. 1 Cor. 5: 8.
11. With bitter herbs.	11. With the endurance of the cross. Matt. 10: 38.
12. With haste, and in the attire of travellers.	12. With a desire to progress in the Christian life, and with the expectation of eternal life. Luke 8: 15. Heb. 13: 9, 15.
13. By the circumcised alone.	13. None but the regenerate eat him, and to these alone is he profitable, and they alone receive not the sacrament to their condemnation. John 6: 56. Heb. 13: 10. 1 Cor. 11: 26.

Has the Passover been abolished?

That the ancient Passover, with all the other types which prefigured the Messiah which was to come, was abolished at the coming of Christ, is evident, 1. From the whole argument of the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews respecting the abolishing of the legal shadows in the New Testament. "The priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old." (Heb. 7: 12; 8: 13.) 2. From the fulfillment of these legal shadows. "These things were done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. A bone of him shall not be broken." "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." (John 19: 36. 1 Cor. 5: 7.) 3. From the substitution of the New Testament; for Christ, when he was about to suffer, and die and sacrifice himself as the true Passover, closed the ordinance relating to the paschal lamb with a solemn feast, and instituted and commanded his supper to be observed by the church in the place of the old passover. "With desire, I have desired to eat with you this passover, before I suffer." "This do in remembrance of me." (Luke 22: 15, 19.) Christ here commands the supper, not the ancient passover, to be celebrated in remembrance of him. As baptism has, therefore, succeeded circumcision, so the Lord's supper has succeeded the passover in the New Testament.

THIRTY-FIRST LORD'S DAY.

Question 83. What are the keys of the kingdom of heaven?

Answer. The preaching of the holy gospel, and Christian discipline, or the excommunication out of the Christain Church: by these two, the kingdom of heaven is opened to believers, and shut against unbelievers.

EXPOSITION.

Having now shown who are to be admitted to the Lord's supper by the church, the doctrine respecting the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, comes naturally next in order, which, in addition to other things, teaches in an especial manner, how those who are not to be admitted to the Lord's table ought to be kept back and excluded from the sacraments, lest they profane them by coming. The things which claim special attention in regard to this subject are,

I. *What is the power of the keys given to the church, and what are the parts thereof?*
II. *Is there any necessity for ecclesiastical discipline, and excommunication?*
III. *To whom is this power committed; against whom and in what order is it to be exercised?*
IV. *To what ends ought it to be directed, and what are the abuses to be avoided?*
V. *In what does the power of the keys differ from civil power?*

I. What is the power of the Keys given to the Church, and what are the parts thereof?

The power of the keys which Christ delivered to the church, is the preaching of the gospel and Christian discipline, by which the kingdom of heaven is opened to believers, and shut against unbelievers. Or it is the office of the church, according to the command of Christ, to make known the will of God by the preaching of the gospel, and ecclesiastical discipline; and to declare and publicly testify the grace of God, and the remission of sins to such as are truly penitent; that is, to those who live in true faith and repentance; and, on the contrary, to denounce upon the wicked the wrath of God and exclusion from the kingdom of Christ, and to exclude them from the church as long as they shall shew themselves estranged from Christ in doctrine and life; and to receive them into the church again when they promise, and show real amendment. *It is called the power of the keys* from a metaphor, or form of speech borrowed from stewards, to whom are delivered the keys of the house in which they are stewards. The keys signify the office of the steward by a metonymy, or change of terms between the sign and thing signified, as we use the term sceptre for kingdom. The church is the house of the living God. The ministers of the church are the stewards of God. For what a faithful steward is in his master's house, managing all things at his master's command, the same is a faithful minister in the church. The declaration of the will of God, therefore, in the church, is accomplished by the ministers, as by stewards, in the name of God. Christ himself is the author of the ministry. He gave this power to the church, and designated it by the term *keys*, saying to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven;" (Matt. 16: 19,) that is, the office or power to open and shut the kingdom of God. At another time he said to all the disciples; "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18: 18.) The keys of the kingdom of heaven are, therefore, the power to open and shut, to bind and loose; and are so called from the efficacy of this power. For the church opens and shuts, binds and looses by the word of God and in the name of Christ, in whose stead ministers act; and the Holy Ghost works effectually by his word, according to the promise of Christ: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." (John 20: 23.)

The keys of the kingdom of heaven consist of two parts: the preaching of the Gospel, or the ministry of the Word, and Christian discipline, to which excommunication belongs; by these two the church opens and shuts, binds and looses. It shuts and binds, by the preaching of the Gospel, when it declares and testifies to unbelievers and hypocrites, that they stand exposed to the wrath of God and eternal condemnation, so long as they are unconverted; and it opens and looses when it declares and testifies to the faithful and penitent the remission of sins and the grace of God, for the sake of Christ's merits. It shuts and binds by Christian discipline, when it excommunicates wicked and obstinate offenders, or forbids them the use of the sacraments, by which they are excluded from the Christian church, and by God himself from the kingdom of Christ; and it opens and looses, when it again receives the same persons, if they repent, as members of Christ and his church.

This distinction, however, must be observed, as it respects the order of those two parts: The keys, by the preaching of the Gospel, first loose and then bind; but, in Christian discipline, they first bind and then loose. Again; the keys loose and bind the same or different persons, by the preaching of the Gospel; but they bind and loose the same persons only, by Christian discipline. *Excommunication* is the rejection, or the excluding of a gross offender—one that is openly wicked and obstinate, from the society of the faithful, by the judgment of the elders, with the consent of the whole church, done in the name and by the authority of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, in order that the offender, being thus put to shame, may repent, and that such things as bring a reproach upon the cause of Christ, may be carefully guarded against. This is not merely an exclusion from the sacraments, but from the whole communion of the faithful, with which the obstinate and disobedient have no connection. It is two-fold: *internal*, which belongs to God alone; and *external*, which belongs to the church. The former is declared on earth by that which is external; whilst the latter is ratified in heaven by that which is internal, according to the promise of Christ; "Whatsoever ye shall bind in earth, shall be bound in heaven." (Matt. 18: 18.)

II. Is there any necessity for ecclesiastical discipline and excommunication?

There can be no doubt but that all the prophets, as well as Christ and his apostles, have preached respecting the ministry of the word. And as ecclesistical discipline has a necessary connection with the ministry of God's word, there can be no doubt respecting this, since God himself, and Christ, and the apostle Paul, have confirmed and established it both by precept and examples. And surely if no country or city can exist without discipline, laws and punishments, then certainly the church, which is the house of the living God also needs some form of government and discipline, although it differs widely from civil power or jurisdiction.

The discipline of the church is, therefore, necessary,

1. On account of the general command of God with respect to guarding against the profanation of the sacraments, both in the Old and the New Testament. In the Old Testament, God would not allow wicked and obstinate offenders to be included among the number of his people, but required them to be excluded from their fellowship. Much less would he permit them to come to the sacraments of his church. "The soul that doeth aught presumptuously, (whether he be born in the land, or a stranger,) the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall be utterly cut off." (Num. 15: 30, 31.) God did indeed desire all to come to the passover, that is, all the members of his church; but he did not regard the rebellious and obstinate as included in the number of those who were in covenant with him. Hence he commanded them to be excluded from his people. "The man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, even that man shall die; and thou shalt put away the evil from Israel." (Deut. 17: 12.) From these two passages

just quoted, it appears that God commanded such as were rebellious and wicked to be cut off from the Jewish commonwealth, and would not allow them to be received amongst the number of his people. Much less, therefore, would he allow them to be regarded as members of his visible church, and be admitted to her sacraments. It is true, indeed, that the judicial law has been abolished, as well as the ceremonies which belonged to the Jewish dispensation; but that great distinction which was observed between the members of the Jewish church and others, has not been set aside. There is in the prophecy of Isaiah, a whole sermon directed against the wicked who offer sacrifices unto God; nor did God desire that such persons should offer sacrifices unto him. Hence he does not desire that they should be admitted to the sacraments of his house. His language is, "Bring no more vain oblations," &c. (Is. 1: 13.) But it is said, by way of objection, God desired, yea, also commanded all to celebrate the Passover. We reply that he did indeed command all those who were regarded as members of his people to observe the passover; but not such as were rebellious, for he expressly commanded them to be excluded from the number of those who stood in covenant relations with him. Isaiah detests the hypocritical offerings of those who are presumptuous enough to sacrifice unto God, whilst living in the habitual and wilful indulgence of sin: "He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol," &c. (Is. 66: 3.) Jeremiah severely reproves those who had the boldness to come into the temple whilst they were still defiled with their sins. (Jer. 6: 7, 10, 20.) Ezekiel declares that God will not be enquired of by those who go after strange gods, and then present themselves in his temple. (Ez. 20: 31.) And, in the 20th verse of the same chapter, he says that those profane his sabbaths, and pollute his sanctuary, who come into his house defiled with their idols. The prophet Amos rejects the sacrifices and worship of wicked transgressors, saying, "I hate, I despise your feast-days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies." (Amos 5: 21.) The prophet Haggai forbids (2: 13, 14) the unclean in soul to touch that which is holy, where he speaks of moral and ceremonial uncleanness. And, in Prov. 15: 8, it is declared that "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord."

In the New Testament, John admitted none to his baptism but such as confessed their sins and repented. "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." "Leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. (Matt. 3: 8; 5: 24.) He, therefore, who does not first reconcile himself to his brother, should be forbidden the use of the sacraments. Christ commands that all submit themselves first to God, according to all his commandments, before they approach any of the sacraments; for, by the term altar, as here used, may be understood any of the sacraments. "Repent and be baptized every one of you." "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized." (Acts 2: 37; 8: 37.) Therefore, if thou dost not believe, it is not lawful. "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God." "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils." "Whosoever shall eat unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of Christ." (1 Cor. 10: 20, 21; 11: 27.) The wicked, eating without faith and repentance, partake unworthily. Therefore

they are guilty of the body of Christ. We ought not to take part in the sins of others: neither ought we to connive at or feign ignorance in regard to the destruction of any one. Hence we should not admit the wicked to the sacraments, lest they eat judgment to themselves.

2. On account of the special command of Christ and his Apostles, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18: 15—19.) The Lord now will not permit his sacraments, which he instituted for the faithful alone, to be administered to publicans, and heathen. And lest any one should understand this command as spoken of private judgment it is expressly added, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, &c.*, which declaration cannot be understood in any other sense, than as referring to the public power of the keys. "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." And "with such an one eat not. Therefore, put away from yourselves that wicked person." "And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (1 Cor. 5: 3, 4, 5, 11, 13. 2 Cor. 6: 15. 2 Thes. 3: 6, 14. 2 John 10: 11.)

3. The power of the keys is necessary on account of the glory of God. For reproach is cast upon the name and cause of God, if all, including blasphemers and such as are notoriously wicked, are regarded as the children of God without any distinction, so as to confound the kingdom of God with that of Satan.

4. It is necessary in order that the sacraments may not be profaned, and that that may not be given to the wicked in the supper which is denied them in the word.

5. That the purity of doctrine and worship may be preserved.

6. For the safety of the church, which God will punish if it knowingly and willingly profane the sacraments, or permit them to be profaned.

7. For the salvation of sinners, in order that they, being frequently admonished, and put to shame, may be brought to repentance.

8. That scandals may be prevented in the church, and that those who are weak may not be corrupted by the bad examples of others. "Know ye not that a little leaven, leaveneth the whole lump." (1 Cor. 5: 6.)

9. That scandals may be prevented on the part of those who are out of the church, and that those who are not as yet members of the church, may not come into connection with it, until they repent of their sins.

10. That the name of God be not blasphemed and evil spoken of by others, and his covenant dishonored.

11. That punishment may be averted from the wicked; for if the ungodly are permitted to come to the sacraments of the church, they bring upon themselves the judgments of God. That this may not, therefore, come to pass, the church is bound to take such measures as will prevent them from coming to the holy sacraments.

12. Those who deny the true faith, and doctrine of Christ are to be excluded from the church, and from the use of the sacraments. The faithful are not to be confounded with those who are aliens from the church; as are those who are openly wicked, who are blasphemers, and who have fallen into such errors as Arianism, Mahometanism, &c. But all those who refuse to repent, deny the true faith, and doctrine of Christ: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him." (1 Tit. 1: 16.) And he that denies the true faith is worse than an infidel. Therefore, those who persevere in their wickedness and refuse to repent, are to be excluded from the church, and from the use of the sacraments.

13. The declaration of Christ, Matt. 7: 6. "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine," is also here in point. But those who persevere in their wickedness, casting reproach upon the church, and even upon God himself, are indeed dogs and swine; and are, therefore, not to be admitted to the sacraments. For if Christ declares this of his preached word, which was instituted for the converted, and unconverted, or such as would yet be converted, much more is it true of his visible word, the sacraments, which were instituted for none, but those who are converted.

14. Avowed infidels, blasphemers, and such as are notoriously wicked, are not to be baptized; for none but such as believe with all their heart ought to be baptized. Hence Philip said to the Eunuch: "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized." (Acts 8: 37.) Nor did John baptize any but such as confessed their sins. Hence, if unbelievers and blasphemers ought not to be baptized, it follows that they must also be excluded from the church, and not be admitted to the Lord's supper; for those who ought not to be baptized, ought not to be admitted to the supper, because that which excludes them from the one sacrament, excludes them also from the other.

15. Those who are not yet baptized are not to be admitted to the supper. But those who fall from, or live in wilful neglect of their baptism, to them baptism is no baptism according to the declaration of the apostle Paul: "If thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision," that is, if thou persevere in thy transgression without repentance. (Rom. 2: 25.) Therefore, those who fall from their baptism are not to be admitted to the Lord's supper. To this some one may object and say: Therefore, those who fall from their baptism, are also to be rebaptized after their reception into the church. But we would reply, that reception into the church by baptism is valid in the case of all those who repent, and that without any repetition of the sign. And in as much as baptism is the sacrament of our reception into the church, those who fall from it are not

in the church, and hence as long as they remain such they are not to be admitted to the church, nor to the Lord's supper.

16. The sign of grace ought not to be granted unto those to whom the promise of grace does not belong; otherwise the church would act wickedly in admitting those whom God excludes, and would contradict itself. For it would absolve by the visible word those whom it would condemn by the preached word. But the promise of grace does not extend to blasphemers, and such as are openly wicked. Therefore, the sign of grace ought not to be granted unto them.

17. Lastly, the institution of the sacraments, or the condition to be observed on our part in coming to the sacraments, demands repentance and faith. Therefore, unbelievers and such as do not repent are not to be admitted to the sacraments. The force of this argument will be seen by stating it thus: Those are to be admitted to the sacraments who have repentance and faith. Therefore those who have not these qualifications are not to be admitted.

III. By whom, against whom, and in what order is the power of the keys to be exercised?

The declaration of the word of God is committed to those to whom the power of the keys is committed. The denunciation of the wrath of God, and the declaration of his grace which is accomplished by the preaching of the gospel is committed to the ministers of Christ. The preaching of the gospel is committed to them alone. But the denunciation of the wrath of God, included in christian discipline, belongs to the whole church; for the whole church exercises discipline, and spiritual jurisdiction. Yet the denunciation which is included in the ministry of the word, is after a different manner from what it is in christian discipline. In the ministry of the word the wrath of God is, by all and every minister, and by them alone, denounced, the word of God going before, against all the impenitent and unbelieving, viz: that they are excluded from the kingdom of Christ so long as they do not repent, and live according to the teachings of the gospel. And if they repent, the grace of God and the remission of sins is declared and testified to them from the word of God by the same ministers.

Obj. Therefore ministers have power to condemn. Ans. They have ministerial power; by which we mean, the office to declare and testify to men according to the command of God, that God remits or does not remit their sins. This is done in two ways. *First*, and in general, when they declare that all those who believe are saved, and that all those who do not believe are condemned. *Secondly*, when in the exercise of this office they declare and testify privately to particular persons, and to every one in particular, that their sins are forgiven them of God for the sake of Christ's merits, whenever they receive the promise of the gospel by a true faith, and that the wrath of God is denounced against every one so long as he does not repent. So Peter declared to Simon Magus: "Thou hast neither part, nor lot in this matter." (Acts 8: 21.) The same thing must be declared to every one in particular, as often as there is a necessity for it; not indeed according to our own pleasure or will, but according to the command of God. This is the power of the keys granted to the pastors of the church, and connected with the ministry of the word. The execution of this sentence, however, belongs to God alone. As it respects ecclesi

astical jurisdiction, or Christian discipline, the case is somewhat different; for the declaration of the favor and wrath of God is not made by any one privately, but by the whole church, or at least in the name of the whole church, by those who have been chosen for this purpose by the common consent of all. This declaration is made for certain causes, and with reference to particular persons, and includes an exclusion from the use of the sacraments, when necessity requires it.

But who are to be excluded from the Christian church, and from the use of the sacraments? An answer to this question may be anticipated from what we have already said upon this subject; which is, that those who either obstinately deny some article of faith, or show themselves unwilling to repent and to submit themselves to the will of God according to all his commandments, and who do not hesitate to declare their intention to persist in a course of open wickedness, — all such are not to be admitted to the church; and if they have been admitted into the church by baptism, they must, nevertheless, not be permitted to approach the Lord's supper until they renounce their errors and show amendment of life.

The *order* which is to be observed in executing the power of the keys, is that which Christ himself has prescribed in Matt. 18. If any one has committed a private offence, he must first be kindly admonished by some one, according to the command of Christ: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." (Matt. 18: 15.) Then, if he does not repent after having been admonished by one, he must be again privately admonished, by taking with thee one or two more. Such admonitions, however, must be delivered according to the word of God, and with proper evidence of good-will towards the offender; and must also be based upon causes which are just, grievous and necessary. And if he will not repent when thus admonished by one or two, he must then be corrected by the whole church, concerning which Christ has also given commandment, saying: "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church." When any one sins by committing an offence publicly against the whole church, he must also be publicly corrected by the church according to the nature of the offence. And if he will not repent when thus admonished and reproved by the church, whether it be he that committed a private offence, or he that committed a public offence, excommunication must at length be inflicted by the church, as the last remedy for the purpose of correcting obstinate and unrepenting sinners, according to the command of Christ: "If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

This, therefore, is the course which should always be pursued for the purpose of correcting and reclaiming those who err, and become refractory in the church: observing the different steps which Christ has prescribed in the passage just quoted. The steps to be taken are four in number: 1. Private brotherly admonition. 2. Admonition by many. 3. Admonition by the church. 4. The public sentence of the church. The first and second steps are to be observed in private offences; the third in notorious and grievous sins or offences; the fourth in the case of contumacy, or of obstinate and determined wickedness, in which only the church proceeds to the act of excommunication, regarding the offender as an heathen and publican — an alien from the church and kingdom of Christ, until he repent

of his wickedness. Hence, before excommunication can be inflicted upon any one, there must necessarily be a knowledge of some error or sin, which is accompanied with obstinacy and determined wickedness on the part of the offender; so that if any one becomes a Papist, or an Arian, or a Davidian, or any other apostate, he must not be held and recognized as a member of the church, even though he may declare himself to be such, and may desire to remain in the church, unless he renounce and detest his error, and live according to the gospel. The reason is, because God will have his church separate and distinct from all the various sects and adherents of the devil. Those, now, who reverse or disregard their baptismal vows, are members of the devil. Therefore they are to be cut off from the church, even though they may declare that they are Christians; for they deny by their works what they profess with their mouths, and so give plain evidence that they lie. Faith and a Christian life cannot exist separately. Those, therefore, who separate them, mock God and his church. An *apostate* is not one who occasionally, or even often offends in doctrine and life, and repents again of his sin; but is such an one who, being convicted of error and open wickedness, is still unwilling to abandon his sins, and to renounce his errors. Yet if any one professes repentance, and makes an outward declaration to this effect, giving some evidence thereof in his life, the church, even though he be inwardly a hypocrite, is bound to receive him, until his true character becomes apparent; for the church is not to judge of things secret and hidden.

IV. What is the design of Christian Discipline, and what abuses are to be avoided in the exercise of it?

Christ has given to the church the power of excommunication, not for the destruction of the sinner, but for his edification and salvation. The design of ecclesiastical discipline is, therefore, not to establish the sovereignty and tyranny of the ministers of Christ. "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, but ye shall not be so." (Luke 22: 25.) Ministers themselves ought most of all to be subject to this discipline, and are especially to be kept within the proper bounds of their calling by this bridle; because the keys do not belong to ministry only, but to the whole church. Much less is it the design of Christian discipline to torment, oppress, or drive to desperation those whose lives are of such a character as to require the exercise of the keys of the kingdom of heaven. These are the foul slanders of those who are the enemies of proper discipline in the church. The true ends of Christian discipline are those which the Apostle Paul has specified, among which we may mention the following:

1. That the obstinate and disobedient may, being put to shame and terrified in this way, be led to proper reflection and repentance. "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 5: 5.)

2. That other Christians may not become corrupted by the conversation and example of gross offenders. One scabbed or diseased sheep may infect the whole flock, unless it be cured or separated from the flock; and a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (1 Cor. 5: 6.)

3. That others by this means may fear to offend. "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." (1 Tim. 5: 20.)

4. That the church may not be disgraced and evil spoken of, on account of public scandals; and that the profanation of the sacraments and the wrath of God may be prevented. "Purge out the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." (1 Cor. 5: 7.)

These are the ends or designs of discipline.

The abuses to be avoided in excommunication are such as these:

First, the different forms of admonition, of which we have already spoken, must not be neglected, neither must the order be inverted, by commencing with the last. There should always be private admonition in the first place, in which he who offends should be kindly admonished, which admonition should include a clear statement of the error or offence in the case — a reproof delivered according to the word of God and an exhortation to repentance.

Secondly, it should be attended to according to the word of God, with proper evidence of brotherly love, and of a desire to benefit those that err, and to secure their salvation. God will not be the executioner of the sentence of another, but of his own. The offending brother must not, therefore, at once be regarded as an enemy, but must be admonished as a brother, according to what the apostle Paul says: "Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." (2 Thes. 3: 15.)

Thirdly, it should be based upon just, weighty and necessary causes, and not upon such as are unjust, doubtful and of small importance. We should never rashly proceed to inflict excommunication upon any one from a slight suspicion; but only when driven to it by urgent necessity, just as physicians never resort to the use of the knife until necessity compels. Such a necessity may be said to exist when errors are entertained which subvert the very foundation of our faith, and when flagrant crimes are obstinately persisted in, so as to endanger the safety of the whole church, or at least certain members of it.

Fourthly, the cause must be carefully and diligently considered by all the elders, and the decision must be approved of by the whole church. It must not be undertaken by the authority of any one person, nor even by the ministers alone; for Christ did not deliver this power to a few persons, or to the ministers alone, (although the execution is committed by the church to a few persons, or to the minister alone,) but to the whole church. "If he shall neglect to hear thee, tell it unto the church." "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but ye shall not be so." (Matt. 18: 17. Luke 22: 25.) The consent and decision of the church is, therefore, to be obtained, 1. On account of the command of God. 2. That no one may be injured. 3. That the act may have greater authority and power. 4. That the ministry of the church may not be changed into an oligarchy, or into the tyranny practiced in the Papal church. 5. That the condemnation of the offender may appear more in accordance with justice.

Lastly, it should be so exercised as not to create any schism in the church, or be the occasion of any scandal, whilst good men see many at variance with each other, the church rent, and evils follow each other in quick succession.

If the minister see or fear these evils he must not proceed, but warn and exhort both publicly and privately. And even though he may not be

able to accomplish anything, he is still free from blame. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5: 6.) The sin and punishment will, in this case, rest upon the obstinate.

IV. In what does the power of the Keys of the kingdom of Heaven differ from civil power?

The points of difference are many, and such as are apparent.

1. Ecclesiastical discipline is exercised by the church; civil power by the judge or magistrate.

2. In the state, judgment is passed according to civil and positive laws; in the church, according to the divine law or word of God.

3. The power of the keys committed to the church depends upon the word of God, and the church exercises her power by the word, denouncing the wrath of God upon the impenitent; punishes the obstinate with the word of God alone, yet in such a way that this punishment takes hold even upon the conscience: civil power employs the sword, and compels the refractory to submit to its authority by temporal punishment alone.

4. The church has different steps of admonition, and if the offender is brought to acknowledge his sin and repents of it, it does not proceed to execute punishment in his case; the magistrate punishes the offender even though he repent.

5. The church in the exercise of discipline, looks to the reformation and salvation of the offender; the magistrate to the execution of justice and the public peace. Will der Dieb nicht zu unserm Herr Gott fahren, so fahre er zum Bösen.

6. As the church exercises discipline in the case of none except the obstinate and disobedient, so it is bound to reverse its decision, and to remove the punishment, whenever there is sufficient evidence of repentance on the part of the offender. The magistrate when he has once inflicted punishment neither reverses the decision, nor removes the punishment. The thief that repents upon the cross, or in the hour of death, is received by Christ into Paradise; the magistrate proceeds to the execution of the punishment to which he is sentenced, and sends him into exile. So Christian discipline often takes cognizance of things which the state does not notice, as when the church casts out of her communion those who do not repent, and refuses to recognize them as her members, whilst the magistrate, nevertheless, tolerates them; and so, on the contrary, the state may banish those whom the church receives. The magistrate may, for instance, inflict capital punishment upon adulterers, robbers, thieves, &c., and yet the church may receive them, if they give proper evidence of true repentance. The difference, therefore, between ecclesiastical and civil power, is clear and apparent.

It now remains for us to notice in a few words some of the objections which the opposers of Christian discipline are wont to bring forward.

Obj. 1. The Scriptures no where command us to exercise the office of the keys. Therefore, no one ought to be excluded from the sacraments. Ans. We deny the antecedent, because the Scriptures contain many declarations bearing directly upon this subject. "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth,

shall be bound in heaven," &c. (Matt. 16 : 19.) Here the power of the keys, committed to all ministers of the word, is declared in express terms. As to the manner in which the church ought to discharge the office of the keys, Christ commands and instructs us as follows: "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18 : 17, 18.) What Christ has here delivered in the form of a command, the apostle Paul confirms as touching the thing itself. "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." "When ye come together into one place this is not to eat the Lord's Supper." "If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him that he may be ashamed." "Of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme." (1 Cor. 5 : 5; 11 : 20. 2 Thes. 3 : 14. 1 Tim. 1 : 20.) There are also many clear testimonies found in the writings of the prophets, from which it is evident that God has commanded the exercise of discipline in his church. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord; I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams," &c. "He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man," &c. "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices." "Unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes; or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth." Hence, Christ also said: "Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." (Is. 1 : 11; 66 : 3. Jer. 7 : 22. Ps. 50 : 16. Matt. 5 : 24.) The Scriptures also contain many other declarations in addition to these, which command that all those who are openly wicked be excluded from the church and the use of the sacraments; as where the unlawful use of the sacraments is condemned, and where ministers are commanded to receive none as members of the church, except such as profess repentance and faith.

To this it is objected, that whilst God forbids the ungodly to come to the sacraments, he does not command that the church should exclude them. But it is sufficient to reply, that what God forbids to be done in the church, that he will have prohibited by the discipline of the church; and that God has commanded the church to exclude those, who are openly wicked is plainly declared in the passages of Scripture already cited.

Obj. 2. Men cannot distinguish the worthy from the unworthy, neither can they know who truly repent, and who persist in wickedness; because they cannot look into the heart, and are not able to cast any into hell. Therefore the church is not empowered with any discipline, by which the godly may be discerned, and separated from the ungodly. Ans. The church does not sit in judgment upon those things which are secret and hidden, but upon those which are manifest, and which are apparent in the outward life and profession. The church does this when it subscribes to the judgment of God with reference to the wicked; that is, when it judges of them according to the requirement of God's word, as when it declares, and testifies according to the word of God that obstinate offenders are

condemned as long as they remain such; and when, according to the word of God, it absolves all those who truly repent. But as to discern from others those whose true character is not known, the church is not able, neither does it arrogate this to itself.

Obj. 3. Christ says in the parable of the wheat and tares, "Let both grow together until the harvest." (Matt. 13: 30.) Therefore none ought to be excluded. Ans. 1. Christ here speaks of hypocrites, who cannot always be discerned from those who are truly pious. Therefore the meaning is, that hypocrites ought not to be cut off and separated from the church, when we do not certainly know them to be such; for the angels will do this at the last day. 2. Christ here distinguishes the office of ministers from that of the magistrate. *Let them grow*, that is, do not put to death those that are estranged from the church; for the minister must not use temporal power against any man, as the magistrate does. If this difference now be properly considered the difference which exists between the church and the kingdom of the devil will still remain.

Obj. 4. Men are to be urged to the performance of good works. The use of the sacraments is a good work. Therefore none should be excluded from the sacraments, but all should be urged to the observance of them. Ans. 1. The minor proposition is not true, unless it be understood to refer exclusively to the use which the faithful make of the sacraments, otherwise their use is not a good work, when observed by the unbelieving. The use of the sacraments is a good work, when works of a moral character precede their observance. When this is the case it is correctly called the *use* of the sacraments; otherwise it is an *abuse* and profanation of the sacraments; for when the wicked observe the sacraments they abuse them. It is for this reason that Christ expressly exhorts the wicked not to present their offering, saying, *Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way*, &c. 2. The major must be distinguished: Men are to be urged to the performance of good works, but in their proper order. They should, in the first place, be urged to the performance of such works as are of a moral character, and then to those which are ceremonial. It is in this sense that we are to understand Christ when he says, "Compel them to come in," &c. (Luke 14: 23.) If the objection were to be presented thus: Good works are not to be forbidden. The use of the sacraments is a good work. Therefore it is not to be forbidden; if thus stated we grant the whole argument; for we do not forbid the use, but the abuse of the sacraments. But it is said, God commanded all to celebrate the passover. Ans. He commanded all, meaning not the wicked, but those who were members of his church, and who were to be retained as citizens of the Jewish commonwealth; for there was an express command that those, who were disobedient should be cut off from the congregation of God's people. But it is still further objected; that there are, nevertheless, many evils accompanying the use of the sacraments. These evils, however, are committed by the impenitent—those who are unwilling to conform to a proper use of the sacraments, and not by those who exhort them to their duty. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness," &c., that is, who desire the performance of that which is good. But if these good works are not performed, it is not their fault. We may not do that which is evil, or omit the good, which God commands, that good may result from such a course. We must do our duty, and leave the event with God. By so doing we shall

always retain a good conscience, even though those good things which we desire are not realized.

Obj. 5. But neither the Prophets, nor Apostles, nor John the Baptist, excluded any from the sacraments; nay, John baptized a generation of vipers. Therefore neither ought the ministers of the church now to exclude any. Ans. We deny what is affirmed in the antecedent; for although those who were baptized of John were from a generation of vipers, yet they were no longer vipers after they were baptized; for he baptized none, but those who confessed their sins. He preached the baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins, and required of those who were baptized to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. The Prophets, although they could not exclude the wicked from the sacrifices, and sacraments of the old dispensation, nevertheless, severely condemned the sins and abuses of those who offered sacrifices; and often delivered long discourses, as well against those who were presumptuous enough to come into the presence of God without having repented of their sins, as against the church which admitted them to her sacrifices. And that the Apostles did exclude the openly wicked from the use of the sacraments, is evident from the example of Paul who commanded the incestuous man of whom we have an account in his first epistle to the Corinthians, to be delivered unto Satan, and to be cut off from the church.

Obj. 6. John admitted by himself alone those who professed repentance and faith, and rejected the impenitent in the same way. Therefore it is lawful for one minister alone, either to admit them that profess repentance and faith, or to exclude them that are obstinate, which has been denied, or the example of the Baptist proves nothing. Ans. The examples are not similar. John was endowed with prophetical and apostolic authority, which ministers of the present day have not. Again, there was at that time particular respect had to the gathering of the church, and not so much to the exclusion of those who were in the church, and had nevertheless forfeited all right to its privileges by their sins, and obstinate perseverance in evil.

A BRIEF REFUTATION OF THE SOPHISMS BY WHICH CERTAIN PERSONS ATTEMPTED TO OVERTHROW ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE IN A PUBLIC DISCUSSION HELD IN HEIDELBERG, (DR. PERER BOQUIN PRESIDING, AND GEORGE WITHERS, AN ENGLISHMAN, REPLYING) ON THE 10TH OF JUNE, ANNO DOMINI, 1568; TAKEN WORD FOR WORD, AS DELIVERED, BY DR. Z. URSINUS, AT THE REPETITION OF THIS DISCUSSION, WHICH TOOK PLACE THE NEXT DAY PRIVATELY IN "COLLEGIAM SAPIENTIAE," IN WHICH THE TWO FOLLOWING THESES WERE PROPOSED WITH REFERENCE TO CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

I. *In connection with the sincere preaching of the word, and the lawful administration of the sacraments, the office of government or discipline in the church must be maintained.*

II. *This office I thus state: That the ministers in connection with the elders should both have and exercise the power of convicting, reproving, excommunicating, and of executing any thing else that pertains to ecclesiastical discipline, upon any that offend, not even excepting Princes themselves.*

Obj. 1. Where the word and sacraments are rightly administered, there the office of discipline must be maintained. But in the primitive church, and in many well ordered churches at the present, the authority

of discipline is not maintained. Therefore the word and sacraments are not rightly administered in these churches, which is absurd. In replying to the major proposition we make the following distinction. The phrase *to administer rightly*, may be understood differently. It may signify, or be understood as referring to that administration which agrees perfectly with the prescript of our Lord. Then it may again be understood of that administration which is not in perfect accordance with the rule which our Lord has laid down, but which is, nevertheless, administered in such a way as is pleasing to God, and profitable to the church. The sacraments are no where rightly administered according to the former signification; but according to the latter signification they may be and are. For although there may be some irregularities or faults which cannot at once be corrected on account of human infirmity, yet the administration may, nevertheless, be pleasing to God, and profitable to the church; for, "blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." Unless these things be granted there will not be a single pure church in the world. This may be regarded as a sufficient refutation of the major proposition. We, in like manner, deny the minor proposition; for the authority of Christian discipline was maintained in the primitive church, and will remain in the church, even where it is imperfectly constituted, although with great abuse, as with the Papists. To this it is objected, that in our, as well as in the Helvetic churches, which are properly constituted churches, excommunication is not attended to, so that what is affirmed in the minor proposition of the above syllogism remains true. But we would reply, that although we may grant that in some churches discipline is not put in force, or badly exercised, yet still that which is affirmed by our opponents cannot be maintained, because the word and sacraments are rightly administered in these churches, according to the other signification of which we have spoken. Here Ursinus quoted a saying of Chrysostom: "*If any wicked person come to the table of the Lord, do not give unto him the body and blood of the Lord. If he will not believe, declare it unto me: I would rather lose my life than admit him.*" Hence Christian discipline was maintained in the early church several centuries after Christ.

Obj. 2. That doctrine which is neither established by the word of God nor proven by examples, must not be forced upon the church. This doctrine respecting excommunication is neither established by the word of God, nor proven by examples. Therefore it must not be forced upon the church. Ans. We deny the minor proposition: for the word of God expressly declares, in Matt. 18: 17, "Tell it unto the church: and if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." The same thing is also confirmed by examples, for proof of which see 1 Cor. 5: 5: "Deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh." Also, 1 Tim. 1: 20: "Whom I have delivered unto Satan."

Objections against the Word, or those portions of Scripture brought forward in support of the position here assumed.

Obj. 1. No mention is made in the 18th chapter of Matthew of the eldership, nor of excommunication. Therefore this passage proves nothing. Ans. We deny the antecedent, because although the very same words are

not used, yet the thing itself is taught in the passage referred to. The eldership is introduced where it is said, *Tell it unto the church;* and excommunication where it is said, *Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.*

Obj. 2. The eldership is not the church. Christ now commands that information be communicated to the church, and that admonition be given by the church. Therefore no mention is made of elders in the case. Ans. We deny the major proposition, although the whole argument may be conceded, viz: that Christ did not mean the eldership, but uses the term church in its proper sense, whether we refer it to the Jewish or Christian church. But yet there must be some order for the government of the church: there must be certain persons appointed and ordained by the church, who may have the management of its affairs, or else there will be confusion.

Obj. 3. It is true, indeed, that information cannot be communicated to the whole church, but to a certain class of persons, whose office is not ecclesiastical, but civil, so that the sense is: Tell it unto the church; by which is meant the senate of the city. Ans. It is here confessed that information cannot be communicated to the whole church, but to a certain class of rulers, which, notwithstanding, is not ecclesiastical, but civil. The question now is, whether this is to be understood of a civil council. This our opponents must prove, which they endeavor to do in this way: That council which punishes with temporal punishments is civil. The council which gave Paul power to put Christians to death inflicted temporal punishments. Therefore it was a civil council. Ans. We reply to the major, that that council which inflicts temporal punishments according to right is civil. But the high priests who gave this power to Paul did it wrongfully, because they had not the right which they usurped and arrogated to themselves. The same thing may also be said in reference to the death of Stephen: for he was slain by a tumult; whilst the priests themselves were consenting to it, but wrongfully.

Obj. 4. Augustin says: The Jews lied when they said, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." (John 18: 31.) Ans. These are the words of Augustin: "*We must not, however, understand them as saying that they might not put any to death on account of the sacredness of the day, which they now began to celebrate. Are ye so hard-hearted, ye treacherous Israelites? Have ye lost all sense by your inveterate malice, as to believe that ye are clear from the blood of the innocent, because ye delivered him into the hands of another for the purpose of being slain.*" Augustin, therefore, did not say that they lied, but only that they did that which they said it was not lawful for them to do.

Obj. 5. Chrysostom understands the words just referred to, to mean, it is not lawful for us, viz., on account of the nearness of the feast. Ans. This is not true, even though it may be thus understood by Chrysostom; because history testifies that their civil jurisdiction and laws were taken from them by Herod the Great; and Josephus says that the council (excepting one Sameas) was put to death by him and Hyrcanus. The Jews therefore designed to say this to Pilate: "*Thou hast the right, or power of the sword: it is not lawful for us to put any man to death;*" which Pilate also bore testimony to when he said, "Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?" (John 19: 10.)

Obj. 6. But Pilate himself said: "Take ye him, and judge him according to your law." (John 18: 31.) Ans. But he meant the law of Moses, as if he would say: If he is a blasphemer, stone him to death; I give my consent thereto.

Obj. 7. But Josephus testifies that Claudius gave the Jews their laws. Ans. Then they had them not before. And still more, Claudius is said to have granted them their ecclesiastical laws, by which nothing more is meant, than that he gave them permission to observe their own laws and rites as it respects religion. "*I desire* (says he) *that their laws, which were violated by the folly of Caius, be no longer infringed upon, and that they be permitted to enjoy the rites of their fathers.*"

Obj. 8. The right of the sword was taken from them by Herod the Great. Therefore they possessed this right before; and still further: at the time when Christ gave command to tell it unto the church, there was only the civil council; from which we may infer that he gave command to tell it unto this council. There were only three councils among the Jews. There was, 1. *The great council*, which was the senate of the entire nation. 2. *The smaller council*, which was the senate of the city of Jerusalem. 3. *The triumvirate.* These were all civil. Hence the council of which Christ speaks must have been a civil council. In reply to this objection we may turn the argument of our opponents, and say, that if the Jews lost their political power under Herod the Great, then they did not possess it in the time of Christ; for it is evident that Herod the Great died before Christ began to teach. And as to the argument that the council of which Christ speaks was civil, we reply that it was not only civil; for it also had ecclesiastical power, and took cognizance of matters pertaining to religion. It consisted of Pharisees and Scribes, of divines and lawyers: for they had moral and judicial laws. Hence the smaller council of which Christ speaks was not merely political, but also ecclesiastical. The question now is, did Christ command to tell it to the council as to its civil or ecclesiastical character? We hold that it was in its ecclesiastical character, and prove it from the text itself: because we are commanded, in the first place, to regard the excommunicated person as an heathen man and publican; that is, as an alien from the kingdom of God. But to declare a man a publican, and an alien from the kingdom of God, does not belong to the civil magistrate, but to the church; because a publican may be a member of the state, but not of the church of Christ. And besides, Christ adds: "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," &c. In these words Christ replies to him who may object as follows: What does it affect me, even though the church may regard me as an infidel or publican. I will nevertheless eat and drink. To such an one, Christ replies: The judgment of the church shall not be in vain, for I myself will execute it. He had said in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," where he speaks of the common authority of the magistrate; but in the passage now under consideration, he speaks particularly of the authority of the church in this case. To bind and loose, therefore, does not belong to the civil magistrate, but to the church.

Thus far we have spoken of the first member, or part of the proposition assumed, that the eldership is included in the term church; we must now proceed to speak of the other part, which is to show that the idea of

excommunication is likewise contained in the declaration of Christ, *Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.*

Obj. 1. But to be regarded as an heathen, and a publican, is not the same thing as to be excommunicated. Therefore, excommunication is not included in the language which Christ employs. Ans. We deny the antecedent. But, say our opponents, in proof of the antecedent which we deny, let him be unto thee as an heathen, does not refer to the public judgment of the church, but to the private judgment of each man. Therefore, he who is regarded as a heathen, by persons privately, is not at once excommunicated by the whole church. But it is sufficient to reply, that he who is regarded as a heathen by persons privately, is looked upon in the same light by the church. Hence Christ speaks of the public judgment of the church.

Obj. 2. But the passage under consideration does not say whom the church regards as an heathen; *but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican.* Therefore, every one regards him as an heathen man according to his own judgment, and not according to the judgment of the church. Ans. True; I regard him in this light, because he neglects to hear the church; but not to hear the church and be a publican, or an alien from the church, do not mean one and the same thing. We also add the following remark, less objectionable: Christ does not speak this of every man privately, but of the whole church; for *to thee* and *to the church* are equivalent; because, when Christ com mands that I shall regard any one as an heathen, he does not, by any means, desire that the church shall in the mean time look upon him as a christian; for then he would desire contradictory things — he would will contrary judgments to be given at the same time by the same individual. Therefore, to be regarded as a publican by one, is to be regarded as such by all, and so by the whole church; and if that denunciation were not made in particular, no one would be accounted as a publican. Hence, to be accounted by the church as a publican, is to be excommunicated, and to be without the communion of the church; so that what we have affirmed remains true, that mention is made in the Scriptures of excommunication, and that it is committed to the church.

Obj. 3. The wicked may be regarded as publicans, and heathens, without the infliction of excommunication. Therefore, a publican and an excommunicated person are not the same. Ans. We deny the antecedent; because to regard any one as being without the communion of the church, and as being excommunicated, are the same.

Obj. 4. But we may regard any one a publican, that is, we may think in our minds that he is such. Ans. Christ does not, however, speak of the thoughts, but of the actions of the church. If he neglect to hear the church, it is necessary for thee to know that; and that thou mayest regard him as an heathen man, and a publican, it is necessary for thee to know, not what the church thinks of him privately, but what it resolves concerning him publicly. Paul, moreover, forbids us to eat, or drink, with the wicked. "With such an one, no not to eat." (1 Cor. 5: 11.) No one now can avoid connection with the wicked as it respects secret meditation. Hence it must be according to the public decision of the church, from which it is easy to see that the Apostle does not allude to the thoughts which we may secretly entertain. The Apostle also, in the same chapter,

commands the Corinthians "to put away from among themselves that wicked person;" by which he means, declare him no longer a member of the church. Hence to look upon any one as a publican is not only to think him such in the mind, but it is also to declare him to be such, and to excommunicate him.

Objections against the examples of excommunication as referred to by the apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 5: 5. 2. Cor. 2: 6. 2. Thes. 3: 14. 1. Tim. 1: 20.

Those who at this day oppose the exercise of discipline on the part of the church, endeavor to evade the force of the examples recorded by the Apostle Paul in two ways. Some positively deny that the Apostle speaks of excommunication when he says: *He that has acted thus, let him be delivered unto Satan;* for, say they, to deliver unto Satan is not to excommunicate, but to remove from their midst by a miraculous punishment, inflicted by the ministry of Satan, or it is to utter direful imprecations, and to deliver to Satan to be punished, yet in such a manner that he remain a member of the church. Others, again, admit that Paul speaks of excommunication, but deny that his example has any force as far as we are concerned, inasmuch as we now have Christian magistrates—persons whose duty it is to maintain order, whilst the church was destitute of such guardians in the time of the Apostles. But as it respects the former class of persons who deny that the Apostle speaks of excommunication, they are evidently condemned by what he says: *Put away from among yourselves that wicked man. With such an one, no not to eat.* These declarations now cannot be understood of any miraculous punishment by death, such as that which was inflicted upon Ananias and Sapphira; but they speak of the ordinary duty and judgment of the church, as is evident: 1. Because he recommends them to put him away from their midst, and reproves them cause they had not already cut him off, saying, "Ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you." (1 Cor. 5: 2.) 2. Because he requires the consent of the church: "When ye are gathered together, and my spirit." (1 Cor. 5: 4.) But there was no need of such a solemnity, or gathering for the working of a miracle. 3. Because he desired that the incestuous man "be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus;" (1 Cor. 5: 5) that is, he desired him to be dealt with in such a manner, that notwithstanding his life might be prolonged, and he repent, his flesh might be subdued by sincere contrition, the old man mortified, and the new man quickened. Hence he did not desire that he should be put to death. 4. The Apostle speaks of separation and exclusion from the church when he says: "Purge out the old leaven." "Keep no company with fornicators." "With such an one, no not to eat." (1 Cor. 5: 7, 11.) All these expressions allude to separation, and not to punishment by death. 5. A comparison of different passages of Scripture will show, that all those who deny the doctrine of Christ, whether in word or deed, ought not to be regarded as Christians. Ambrose says, that this incestuous man, referred to in the fifth chapter of first Corinthians, when his offence was known, was to be separated from the assembly of the brotherhood, or church. All those now

who are excluded from the church, are deservedly said to be delivered unto Satan, inasmuch as they are in his kingdom, and led by him, as long as they do not repent.

As it respects those who admit that the Apostle speaks of excommunications in the places above referred to, they evidently reason falsely when they assign as a reason why he would have the incestuous man excommunicated, that there was then no Christian magistrate; for Paul adduces very different reasons, even such as are of force until this present time, among which we may mention the following: 1. The command of Christ, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit;" that is, by the authority and command of Christ: "Tell it unto the church:" "Let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican." 2. That the excommunicated person might repent, and be saved. "Deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." 3. That other members of the church might not become infected thereby. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? For Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us," that we may live with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. And that we may now be made a new lump, let us cast out the old leaven of malice and wickedness; or if we cannot altogether purge it out, let us not, at least, professedly tolerate it.

These are the reasons on account of which Paul commanded the incestuous man to be cast out of the church. And the Scriptures no where teach that the early church, did ever excommunicate any wicked persons, because there were no magistrates. The duties of the church and of the magistrate always have been, and still remain distinct. It is plain, therefore, that the Apostle speaks of excommunication, when he says, *Deliver him unto Satan—Put away that wicked person from among you:* and gives command in respect to the ordinary power of the church against the disobedient and obstinate, whether it be accompanied with any miracle, or not.

Obj. 1. Nathan did not excommunicate David, who was guilty of the sin of adultery. Therefore, Paul did not excommunicate the incestuous man. Ans. David repented upon the first admonition. Hence excommunication was not inflicted in this case. Paul also speaks with reference to the condition of repentance, saying, *Put him away*, that is, if he does not repent, or has not already repented of his sin, upon the presence of which condition, he commands him to be received again into the bosom of the church. This condition must be understood, because Christ commanded that certain steps, or degrees of admonition should first precede, and God at all times receives those who are penitent. The thief upon the cross was not disregarded, but received by Christ as soon as he gave evidence of true repentance. "If thy brother shall sin against thee until seventy times seven, thou shalt forgive him." (Matt. 18: 21, 22.) Therefore, not sinners, but such as are obstinate and continue impenitent, are to be excommunicated, in which number David cannot be included.

Obj. 2. Christ did not excommunicate any one. Therefore, Paul did not do it, neither ought the church now to excommunicate any one. Ans. The consequence which is here drawn is not proper, because it proceeds from the denial of the fact to the denial of the right, or lawfulness of the thing itself. It is the same, as if any one were to argue; Christ did not baptize:

therefore, Paul did not baptize, neither ought the church to baptize. Christ baptized none, but he gave command to his disciples to baptize all nations. So likewise he excommunicated none, but commanded the church to excommunicate obstinate offenders. "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man." "Leave thy gift before the altar," &c. Philip said to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest be baptized." Therefore, Philip would not have baptized him had he not believed.

Obj. 3. Paul says, "Ye have not mourned that he which hath done this deed might be taken away from among you." (1 Cor. 5: 2.) Therefore they should have prayed that God would, through Satan, remove the incestuous man in some miraculous way. Ans. The words which are translated, *Ye have not mourned*, mean, according to the original, *Ye have not been earnest in removing that scandal which ought not to be found in your midst;* from among you, I say, because, in the thirteenth verse, the Apostle says, *Put away from among yourselves that wicked person.* Hence the words, *That he ought to be taken from among you*, signify that he was to be removed by the church, and not by Satan. To this it is objected, that Paul uses the same word in reference to himself, in 2 Cor. 12: 21, where he says, "*I shall bewail* many which have sinned already, and have not repented," &c. In this passage, the word *bewail*, does not mean *an anxiety* to remove a scandal from the church. Therefore, neither does it in the above reference. But it is sufficient to reply that the Apostle says, 13th ch. and 2nd v., "If I come again, I will not spare," where he expresses the cause of his grief, that he might feel himself constrained to punish more severely the obstinate and impenitent—even to expel them from the church.

Obj. 4. Paul explains what he means, in that he declares that he did not command the Corinthian church to excommunicate the incestuous man, when he says, "Sufficient to such a man is the punishment which was inflicted of many." (2 Cor. 2: 6.) Therefore, the declarations, "Let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican," and "Put him away from among you," mean nothing more than to *rebuke*. Ans. The consequence which is here drawn is false, because it seeks to establish a rule by one single instance. A reproof was all that was needed in the present case, because he repented. But it does not follow from this, that nothing more is required in other instances of a different character. To this it is objected: That which the Corinthians did, the Apostle commanded. But they did nothing more than rebuke. Therefore the Apostle meant nothing more than a rebuke, when he commanded them to put him away from among them, and to deliver him unto Satan. We reply to the major proposition, that the Apostle did indeed command them to reprove him; but not only to reprove; for he commanded them also to cast him out of their midst if he would not repent of his sin. If he would, however, repent, a reproof would be sufficient in his case. It does not then follow: they merely reproved him. Therefore the Apostle commanded them to reprove him. This may be regarded as a sufficient reply. Yet we may add still further that the Greek word which is here used, does not merely mean to disapprove of a thing or to reprove, but also to excommunicate, because excommunication is by word only. And that it may not only, but must be so understood, is evident, 1. Because, he says, "So that contrariwise ye ought to forgive him." (2 Cor. 2: 7.)

Therefore he was now excommunicated and not yet received, but to be received: not only was he reproved, but he was also cast out. 2. It was inflicted *of many*. This is a confirmation of the explanation which we have given of the words of Christ, viz., that by the church we are to understand, not the confused multitude, but the elders of the church: for the reproof was given by the elders and chief men of the church. 3. The Apostle also says, 2 Cor. 2: 9, "To this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you." He praises them, therefore, because they were obedient. 4. The Apostle likewise says, in v. 8, "I beseech you that ye would confirm your love towards him." The Greek word here translated, *to confirm*, means to declare pardon publicly. Therefore pardon had not been as yet granted unto him. It is used in this sense in Gal. 3: 15, where it is said, "Though it be a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed," that is, ratified by public authority. The Apostle's meaning then is, that they should declare their love towards that man by public testimony. Hence to forgive, as the Apostle here uses it, is to receive the excommunicated person into favor. This he often repeats. There was also some considerable time between the writing of the first and second epistles to the Corinthians. Therefore he stood excommunicated during that time. In the first epistle he says, that he hears there were certain wicked persons amongst their number. These he commands to be excommunicated. It is probable that the Corinthians obeyed this command, excommunicated them, and wrote to the Apostle that they had obeyed him; for, in the second chapter of his second Epistle, he commends them for their obedience; and commands them to receive again the incestuous person, if he would repent.

Obj. 5. Excommunication does not require any excuse. But Paul excuses himself that he had commanded him to be delivered unto Satan. Therefore he did not command that he should be excommunicated, but that a more grievous punishment should be inflicted. Ans. We deny the major proposition, because exclusion from the church and kingdom of Christ, being the heaviest punishment, requires an excuse more than any punishment which may be inflicted upon the body.

Obj. 6. Ministers cannot exclude any one from the kingdom of God. Therefore Paul did not command the Corinthians to do this. We reply to the antecedent, that ministers cannot, by their own authority, exclude any from the kingdom of God; but they can, in the name of Christ, according to the command of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 5: 4, "When ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ." Again, they cannot cast any out of the kingdom of God, but they can and ought to declare the rejection of those whom God declares in his word that he has rejected. For, to excommunicate is nothing else than to subscribe to the divine judgment, by denouncing upon incorrigable offenders the judgment which God inflicts. This the church may not only do, but even ought to do. It is for this reason that the Apostle reproves the Corinthians, because they did not excommunicate the incestuous man; but waited until they were admonished. Hence he reprimands them because they had departed from the ordinary course which they ought to have pursued—they did not exercise the known and ordinary power of the church, and declare him, according to the command of Christ, a heathen man and publican.

Obj. 7. The Apostle commands that the incestuous man should be

delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh. (1 Cor. 5: 5.) But the word which is here translated *destruction*, signifies, as it is used in the Scriptures, a violent death. Therefore it means, in this place, some miraculous death inflicted upon the body by Satan, that the soul might be saved. Ans. A careful examination of the circumstances connected with this case, will show that we are to understand by the word destruction, as it is here used, the mortification of the old man; for the opposition of the flesh to the Spirit; and indeed this phrase itself is frequently used by Paul in this sense. The scope or design of the passage teaches the same thing: for the Apostle desired that the man might be delivered unto Satan, that the flesh might be mortified and the spirit saved, or that he might be converted, and saved in the life to come. Hence he did not desire him to be removed from this life by some miraculous agency of Satan. To this it is objected, that no one can be delivered unto Satan for the conversion, or mortification of the old man: to which we may reply, that it is true that to be delivered unto Satan does not of itself produce such a result, but it accomplishes this by accident, by which we mean that it brings it to pass by the mercy of God, that the faithful are reclaimed by these chastisements. We may also rebut the argument of our opponents by the same reason with which they hope to refute us, by saying that Satan puts no one to death, that he might save his soul.

Obj. 8. But if the Apostle had willed the incestuous man to be excommunicated, he would have declared his desire more expressly. Ans. We must, however, not only have respect to the clearness, but also to the force and power of the language which is used in reference to any particular subject. Here there was no need of greater clearness, inasmuch as the Corinthians understood what he desired, or else he would have reproved them unjustly.

Obj. 9. A brother is not to be excommunicated. Paul desired him whom he gave command by letter to be noted, to be counted as a brother. (2 Thes. 3: 15.) Therefore he did not desire that he should be excommunicated. The major proposition is proven thus: Things that are contrary cannot be regarded as synonymous. To excommunicate any one, and to regard him as a brother, are contrary things: for to excommunicate, is not to count as a brother. Therefore, to count the same person as a brother, and not as a brother, is absurd. Ans. The phrase, *to count as a brother*, admits of different interpretations, on account of the various degrees of brotherhood, so that the contrariety here spoken of, has no force. All men are our brethren and neighbors, both Christians and Turks. Yet Christians, although they regard the Turks as brethren, and desire their salvation, do nevertheless not count them as Christian brethren. If the Turks are, therefore, to be regarded as brethren, much more ought we to regard those who were formerly Christians, as our brethren, and desire their salvation. There is also here a fallacy in understanding that to be true in general which is so only in part. Count him as a brother, viz., in love, desire, and hope of saving him; but not so as to enumerate him among the sons of God and members of the church, until he repent. And still more, the Apostle does not say, *count him as a brother*, but *admonish him* as a brother; that is, as one who was a brother, and who, if he repent, must again be viewed as a brother. For those who are excommunicated are not so entirely cut off from all hope of salvation, but that they may return to

repentance, and again be included in the fold of Christ. Paul uses this phrase, because he desired that love, and a hope of amendment might be the rule of all the reproofs given; for one brother admonishes another with the feelings of a friend, and with a view to promote his well-being.

Obj. 10. We are not to follow the example of the apostle Paul in what he did. Paul excommunicated Hymeneus and Alexander, without the consent of the church. Therefore no one must be excommunicated. Ans. The major proposition is false, if understood generally. But, say our opponents, it is proven from the fact that what the Apostle did, he did by apostolic authority, which we are not required to follow. And the minor, say they, is proven from what the Apostle says: "Whom I have delivered unto Satan." (1 Tim. 1: 20.) But our ministers and pastors cannot do this. Therefore it must needs be that the Apostle did this by some special authority. Ans. We grant the whole argument, that we ought not to imitate the Apostle if he did it alone. But admitting this argument, it nevertheless does not follow; therefore, it is not lawful to excommunicate any one: for if this were true, there would be more in the conclusion than in the premises. What was lawful for the Apostle to do by apostolic authority, that is also lawful for the ministers of the church to do by ordinary power and authority. We may also deny the minor proposition, because this passage declares nothing more, than what the Apostle did. It says nothing as to the manner in which he did it, whether alone, or in connection with others.

THIRTY-SECOND LORD'S DAY

THE THIRD GENERAL DIVISION OF THE CATECHISM.

OF THANKFULNESS.

Having now considered the misery of man, and his deliverance through Christ, the doctrine of gratitude or thankfulness is necessary, 1. On account of the glory of God, inasmuch as the chief end of our redemption is thankfulness, which comprehends acknowledgement and praise for the benefits of Christ. 2. On account of our consolation, which consists in our deliverance by the free grace of God. None now obtain this deliverance, but those who desire to show their gratitude to God. 3. That we may render unto God such worship as is lawful, and acceptable. God disapproves of all worship which grounds itself in self-will. We must, therefore, show from the word of God, what is the nature of true thankfulness, which is the worship due to God. 4. That we may know that all our good works are expressions of thankfulness, and have no merit in the sight of God.

Thankfulness in general is a virtue acknowledging and professing the person from whom we have received benefits, as well as the greatness of the benefits themselves, with a desire to perform towards our benefactor such reciprocal duties as are becoming and possible. It includes truth and justice. *Truth*, because it acknowledges and makes mention of the benefits received: and *justice*, because it desires to return thanks equal to that which has been received.

True Christian thankfulness, therefore, which is here taught, is an acknowledgement and profession of our gracious deliverance, through Christ, from sin and death, and a sincere desire to avoid sin, and every thing that might offend God, and to conform the life according to his will; to desire, expect, and receive all good things from God alone, by a true faith, and to render thanks for the benefits received.

This thankfulness likewise consists of two parts—truth and justice. *Truth* acknowledges and professes the benefit of our free redemption, and renders thanks unto God for it. *Justice* offers unto God such a return as he requires from us, which is nothing else than a true worship of him, consisting of obedience and good works. The doctrine of prayer belongs to truth; whilst that of good works to justice. That in which both these things root and ground themselves, is the conversion of man to God: for the works of none but those who are regenerated, are good and pleasing to God. Hence we must, under this division of the Catechism, treat of man's conversion to God, and of the law of God. There are, therefore, four principal Common Places which belong to this general division of thankfulness; Man's conversion—good works—the Law of God, and prayer.

The order and connection of these several parts may be thus explained. We have learned, from what has been said upon the two former general divisions of the Catechism, that we are redeemed from sin and death, that is, from all the evils of guilt and punishment by no merit of ours, but only by the mere grace of God for the sake of Christ's merits. From this, it follows that we ought to be thankful to God for this great benefit. We

cannot, however, show and approve ourselves thankful to God, except we are truly converted: for whatever is done by those who are unconverted, is done without faith, and is, therefore, sin and abomination in the sight of God. Hence, those things which are to be spoken concerning man's conversion to God, are first in order. Then follows the subject of good works; since true conversion cannot be without them, and we in this way especially show our gratitude to God. Afterwards, there is subjoined the doctrine respecting the law of God, from which we learn what constitutes good works. Those now are in reality good works in which God is worshipped aright, and by which we declare our gratitude to him; which are done by faith, according to the command of God's law, and with the design that we may honor and glorify God thereby. And seeing that God desires to be chiefly honored and praised by us, by invocation and prayer, it follows, lastly, that prayer is likewise necessary, in order that we may properly express our thankfulness to God.

Question 86. Since then we are delivered from our misery, merely of grace through Christ, without any merit of ours, why must we still do good works?

Answer. Because that Christ, having redeemed and delivered us by his blood, also renews us by his Holy Spirit, after his own image; that so we may testify, by the whole of our conduct, our gratitude to God for his blessings, and that he may be praised by us; also, that every one may be assured in himself of his faith, by the fruits thereof; and that by our godly conversation others may be gained to Christ.

EXPOSITION.

This Question, with respect to the moving causes of good works, is placed first, even before the Question relating to man's conversion, not because good works precede conversion, but because the things which follow are in this way more strikingly connected with what precedes. Human reason argues in this way from the doctrine of free satisfaction: He is not bound to make satisfaction, for whom another has already satisfied. Christ has satisfied for us. Therefore, there is no need that we should perform good works. We reply, that there is more in the conclusion than in the premises. All that legitimately follows, is: Therefore, we ourselves are not bound to make satisfaction, which we grant, 1. In respect to the justice of God, which does not demand a double payment. 2. In respect to our salvation, which, in other respects, would be no salvation. Yet we are, nevertheless, bound to render obedience, and perform good works, for the reasons which are referred to, and explained in the above Question of the Catechism:

1. Because good works are the fruits of our regeneration by the Holy Spirit, which are always connected with our free justification. "Whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified." "Such were some of you; but ye are washed; but ye are sanctified; but ye are justified," &c. (Rom. 8: 30. 1 Cor. 6: 11.) Those, therefore, who do not perform good works, show that they are neither regenerated by the Spirit of God, nor redeemed by the blood of Christ.

2. That we may express our gratitude to God for the benefit of redemption. "Yield your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." "That ye present your bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service," &c. (Rom. 6: 13; 12: 1.)

3. That God may be glorified by us. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "That they may, by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." (Matt. 5: 16. 1 Pet. 2: 12.)

4. Because they are the fruits of faith — that by which our own faith, as well as the faith of others is judged of. "Give diligence, to make your calling and election sure;" after which certain copies add the words, *by good works.* "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." "Faith worketh by love." "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (2 Pet. 1: 10. Matt. 7: 17. Gal. 5: 6, 22.)

5. That we may bring others to Christ. "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." "Ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may, without the word, be won by the conversation of their wives." "Let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." (Luke 22: 32. 1 Pet. 3: 1. Rom. 14: 19.) These causes, now, must be explained and urged with great diligence, in our sermons and exhortations to the people; and here we may cite, as being in point, the whole of the sixth chapter, and the first part of the eighth chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans, down to the sixteenth verse.

For a further explanation of the first cause, we may remark, that the benefit of justification is not given without regeneration: 1. Because Christ has merited both; viz., the remission of sins, and the habitation of God within us by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, now, is never inactive, but is always efficacious, and so brings it to pass that those in whom he dwells are made conformable to God. 2. Because the heart is purified by faith: for in all those to whom the merits of Christ are applied by faith, there is kindled the love of God, and a desire to do those things which are pleasing in his sight. 3. Because God bestows the benefit of justification upon none, but such as render true gratitude. But no one ever renders true gratitude except those who receive the benefit of regeneration. Therefore, neither of these can be separated from the other.

We must also observe the difference which exists between the first and second causes. The *first* shows what Christ effects in us by virtue of his death; whilst the *second* teaches to what we are bound in view of the benefits received.

Question 87. Cannot they then be saved, who, continuing in their wicked and ungrateful lives, are not converted to God?

Answer. By no means; for the holy Scripture declares that no unchaste person, idolater, adulterer, thief, covetous man, drunkard, slanderer, robber, or any such like, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

EXPOSITION.

This Question naturally grows out of the preceding one; for since good works are the fruits of our regeneration — since they are the expression of our thankfulness to God, and the evidences of true faith; and since none are saved but those in whom these things are found; it follows, on the other hand, that evil works are the fruits of the flesh—that they are manifestations of ingratitude, and evidences of unbelief, so that no one that continues to produce them can be saved. Hence, all those who are not converted to God from their evil works, but continue in their sins, are condemned for ever, according to the following declarations of the word of God: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, &c., shall inherit the kingdom of God." "Of the which I have told you in times past that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God." "For this ye know; that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death." (1 Cor. 6: 9. Gal. 5: 21. Eph. 5: 5, 6. 1 John 3: 14.)

We may also observe, that another reason for good works may be deduced from the consequence which results from evil works; viz., that all those who perform evil works, and continue in their wicked and ungrateful lives, cannot be saved, inasmuch as they are destitute of true faith, and conversion.

THIRTY-THIRD LORD'S DAY.

Question 88. In how many parts doth the true conversion of man consist?

Answer. In two parts; in the mortification of the old, and in the quickening of the new man.

Question 89. What is the mortification of the old man?

Answer. It is a sincere sorrow of heart, that we have provoked God by our sins; and more and more to hate and flee from them.

Question 90. What is the quickening of the new man?

Answer. It is a sincere joy of heart in God, through Christ, and with love and delight to live according to the will of God in all good works.

EXPOSITION.

The doctrine touching man's conversion to God now claims our attention, concerning which we must inquire:

I. *Is conversion necessary?*
II. *What is it?*
III. *Of how many parts does it consist?*
IV. *What are the causes of it?*
V. *What are the effects of it?*
VI. *Is it perfect in this life?*
VII. *In what does the conversion of the godly differ from the repentance of the wicked?*

I. Is the conversion of man to God necessary?

Man's conversion in this life is so necessary, that without it no one can obtain everlasting life in the world to come, according to what the Scriptures teach: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." "If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked." (John 3: 5. Luke 13: 3. 1 Cor. 6: 9. 2 Cor. 5: 3.) The example of the foolish virgins (Matt. 25: 1–10) who were excluded from the marriage, because they had not their lamps burning and filled with oil, is here in point. We may also here cite the following declarations of Christ: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning." "Be ye ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." "The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers." (Luke 12: 35, 40, 46.) We may here also quote the notable saying of Cyprian against Demetrius: "*When we have once departed this life, there is no more room for repentance, or work of satisfaction. Here life is either lost or gained: here we secure our eternal salvation by the worship of God and the fruit of faith. Nor let any one be hindered, either by sin or external opposition, from coming to obtain salvation. No repentance is too late for any one still remaining in the world,*" &c. From this it appears how necessary conversion is for those who are to be saved. Hence all our exhortations to repentance must be based upon the absolute necessity of conversion to God, in all those who are to be justified.

II. What is man's Conversion to God?

The Hebrew expresses the idea of conversion by the word *Teschubah;* the Greek by μετανοια and μεταμελεια. There are some who affirm that these Greek words differ from each other in this: that the former is used only in reference to the repentance of the godly, whilst the latter is used also in reference to the repentance of the ungodly. Of Judas it is said, *that he repented himself* (Matt. 27: 3), where the word μεταμεληθεις is used. Of Esau it is said, *he found no place of repentance* (μετανοιας). (Heb. 12: 17.) Of God it is said (Rom. 11: 29), *the gifts of God are without repentance*, where the word αμεταμελητα is used; that is, they are of such a kind that he himself cannot repent of them. The Septuagint, in speaking of God, uses both words without making any distinction. *It*

repents me (μεταμελομα) *that I have set up Saul to be king.* (I Sam. 15: 11.) *The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent* (ου μετανοησει). The difference, therefore, is either very small, or none at all, unless that the former Greek word above mentioned properly signifies a change of the mind, whilst the latter expresses a change of the will or purpose. In conversion, however, there is a change both of the understanding and the will.

The Latins have a number of words by which they express the same thing. They call it *regeneratio*, *renovatio*, *resipiscentia*, *conversio*, *pœnitentia*. Resipiscentia seems properly to correspond with the Greek μετανοια; for as *resipiscentia* is derived from *resipisco*, which means to become wise after having done a thing; so μετανοια is from μετανοεω, which means to become wise after having committed something wrong; to change the mind, and to alter the purpose. *Pœnitenia* is said to be derived either from *pœnitet* or from *pœna*, because the sorrow which is in repentance is, as it were, a punishment. Or else, as Erasmus supposes, it is from *pone tenendo*, as if to repent were to lay hold of a later purpose, or to understand a thing after it is done. But whatever may be the derivation of the word *pœnitentia* or repentance, it is more obscure than the term conversion. For repentance does not comprehend the whole extent of the subject—it does not express from what, and to what we are changed, but merely signifies the sorrow which is felt after the commission of some sin. Conversion, on the other hand, embraces the whole, as it adds that which is the beginning of a new life by faith.

The term repentance is, moreover, of a broader signification than conversion: for *conversion* is spoken of only in reference to the godly, who alone are converted to God. The same thing may be said of μετανοια and *resipiscentia*,—that they refer merely to the godly; for by these three terms the new life of the godly is signified. But *pœnitentia* is spoken of the ungodly also, as of Judas, who did indeed repent of his wicked deed, but was not converted; because the ungodly, when they sorrow, are not converted or reformed. Thus far we have spoken of the terms which have reference to this subject; we must now proceed to inquire into the thing itself.

A definition, with respect to the parts of conversion, may be obtained from the 88th Question of the Catechism, where it is defined to be the mortification of the old, and the quickening of the new man. It is more fully expressed in the following definition: *Man's conversion to God* consists in a change of the corrupt mind and will into that which is good, produced by the Holy Ghost through the preaching of the law and the gospel, which is followed by a sincere desire to produce the fruits of repentance, and a conformity of the life to all the commands of God. This definition is confirmed by the following passages of Scripture: "If thou wilt return, return unto me." "Wash you, make you clean." "But ye are washed; but ye are sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." "Depart from evil, and do good." (Jer. 4: 1. Is. 1: 16. 1 Cor. 6: 11. Ps. 34: 14.) The whole definition is expressed in Acts 26: 18, 20: "I send thee to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." "But shewed that they should repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."

III. Of how many parts does Conversion consist?

Conversion consists of two parts: the mortification of the old man, and the quickening of the new man. We speak more properly in this way, using the language of Paul, than if we were, as some do, to make conversion consist in contrition and faith. By contrition they understand mortification; and by faith the joy which follows the desire of righteousness and new obedience, which are indeed effects of faith, but not faith itself. Contrition also precedes conversion, but is not conversion itself, nor any part of it, being only a preparation, or that which leads to conversion; and that only in the elect. *The old man* which is mortified is the sinner only, or the corrupt nature of man. *The new man* which is quickened is he who begins to depart from sin, or it is the nature of man as regenerated. The *mortification* of the old man, or of the flesh, consists in the laying off and subduing of the corruption of our nature, and includes, 1. A knowledge of sin, and of the wrath of God. 2. Sorrow for sin, and on account of having offended God. 3. Hatred of sin, and an earnest desire to avoid it. The Scriptures speak of this mortification of sin in the following places: "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." "Rend your hearts, and not your garments." "Come and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up." (Rom. 8: 13. Joel 2: 13. Hosea 6: 1.) From this it appears that mortification, or conversion, is very improperly attributed to the wicked, in whom there is no hatred or shunning of sin, nor sorrow for sin, all of which is embraced in the mortification of the old man. A knowledge of sin precedes sorrow, because the affections of the heart follow knowledge. Sorrow may follow a knowledge of sin on the part of the ungodly, from a sense of present, and from a fear of future evil, viz: of temporal and eternal punishment; yet this sorrow is not properly a part of conversion, nor a preparation to it; but rather a flight and turning away from God, and a rushing into desperation, as in the case of Cain, Saul, Judas, &c. It is called a sorrow, not unto salvation — the sorrow of the world, working death — a sorrow not after a godly sort, &c. In the godly, however, this sorrow arises from a sense of the displeasure of God, which they sincerely acknowledge and lament, and is connected with a hatred and abhorrence of all past sins, and with a shunning or turning away from all present and future sin. This sorrow is a part of conversion, or at least a preparation to it, and is called a sorrow unto salvation — a sorrow which is after a godly sort, working repentance unto salvation. The knowledge of sin, sorrow for sin, and a flying from it, differ in their subject, or as it respects that part of our being in which they have their proper seat. The knowledge of sin is in the mind, sorrow for sin in the heart, and fleeing from it in the will. The turning, which is included in conversion, is in the heart and will, and is a turning from one thing to another — from evil to good, according to what the Psalmist says: "Depart from evil and do good." (Ps. 34: 14.)

It is called in Scripture *mortification*, 1. Because, as one that is dead cannot perform the actions of a living man, so our nature, when its corruption is once removed, no more performs the actions peculiar to it in its corrupt state; that is, it does not produce actual sin when original sin is once circumscribed and kept under proper restraint. "For he that is dead

is freed from sin." (Rom. 6 : 7.) 2. Because, this mortification is not without wrestling and pain: "for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit." (Gal. 5 : 17.) It is for this reason that this mortification is called a crucifixion of the flesh. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Gal. 5 : 24.) 3. Because, it is a ceasing from sin. It is, moreover, not simply called mortification, but the *mortification of the old man*, because, by it not the substance of man, but sin in man, is destroyed. The expression, *old man*, is also added for the purpose of distinguishing between the repentance of the godly and ungodly; for in the godly, not the man, but the old man is destroyed, whilst in the ungodly it is not the old man, but the man.

The quickening of the new man is a true joy and delight in God, through Christ, and an earnest and sincere desire to regulate the life according to the will of God, and to perform all good works. It embraces three things which are different from what is included in mortification: 1. A knowledge of the mercy of God, and an application of it in Christ. 2. Joy and delight arising from the fact that God is reconciled to us through Christ, and that obedience is begun in us and shall be perfected. 3. An ardent desire to perform new obedience, or to sin no more, but to render gratitude to God during our whole life, and to retain his love, which desire is itself new obedience according to the following declarations of Scripture: "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." "I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." "Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." "Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Rom. 5 : 1; 14 : 17. Is. 57 : 15. Rom. 6 : 11. Gal. 2 : 20.)

This part of conversion is called *quickening*, 1. Because, as a living man performs the actions of one that is alive, so this quickening includes the kindling of new light in the understanding, and the producing of new qualities and activities in the will and heart, from which a new life and new works proceed. 2. Because, it includes on the part of those who are converted, joy and delight in God, which affords great comfort and consolation. It is added *through Christ*, because we cannot rejoice in God, unless he be reconciled unto us. It is now only through Christ that God is reconciled unto us. Hence, we only rejoice in God through Christ.

These two parts of conversion spring from faith. The reason is, because no one can hate sin and draw nigh to God, unless he loves God. But no one loves God who is not possessed of faith. Hence, although there is no express mention made of faith in either part of conversion, this is done, not because faith is excluded from conversion, but because the whole doctrine of conversion and thankfulness presupposes it, as a cause is presupposed from the presence of its own peculiar effect.

Obj. But faith produces joy. Therefore, it does not produce grief and mortification. Ans. It is not absurd to affirm that the same cause produces different effects by a different kind of operation and in different respects. So faith produces grief, not of itself, but by an accident, which

is sin, by which we offend God our kind and gracious father. Of itself it produces joy, because it assures us of God's fatherly will towards us, by and for the sake of Christ. Reply. The preaching of the law precedes faith, since the preaching of repentance commences with the law. But the preaching of the law works sorrow and wrath. Therefore, there is a certain sorrow before faith. Ans. We grant that there is a certain sorrow before faith, but not such as constitutes a part of conversion; for the sorrow of the ungodly which is before and without faith, is rather a turning away from God, than a return to him, which being contrary, cannot agree neither wholly nor in part. But the contrition and sorrow which the elect experience is a certain preparation, leading to conversion, as we have already shown.

IV. What are the causes of Conversion?

The Holy Spirit, or God himself, is the chief efficient cause of our conversion. Hence, it is that the saints pray that God would convert them, and that repentance is frequently called in the Scriptures the gift of God. "Turn thou me and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God." "Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned." "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins;" from which we may draw a most forcible argument in proof of the Divinity of Christ, inasmuch as it is peculiar to God alone to grant repentance and forgiveness of sins. "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." "If God, peradventure, will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil," &c. (Jer. 31: 18. Lamen. 5: 21. Acts 5: 31; 11: 18. 2 Tim. 2: 25.)

The means or instrumental causes of conversion are the law — the gospel, and again, the doctrine of the law after that of the gospel. For the preaching of the law goes before, preparing and leading us to a knowledge of the gospel: "for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3: 20.) Hence, there can be no sorrow for sin without the law. After the sinner has once been led to a knowledge of sin, then the preaching of the gospel follows, encouraging contrite hearts by the assurance of the mercy of God through Christ. Without this preaching there is no faith, and without faith there is no love to God, and hence no conversion to him. After the preaching of the gospel, the preaching of the law again follows, that it may be the rule of our thankfulness and of our life. The law, therefore, precedes, and follows conversion. It precedes that it may lead to a knowledge and sorrow for sin: it follows that it may serve as a rule of life to the converted. It is for this reason that the prophets first charge sin upon the ungodly, threaten punishment, and exhort to repentance; then comfort and promise pardon and forgiveness; and lastly, again exhort and prescribe the duties of piety and godliness. Such was, also, the character of the preaching of John the Baptist. It is in this way, that the preaching of repentance comprehends the law and the gospel, although in effecting conversion each has a part to perform peculiar to itself.

The next instrumental and internal cause of conversion, is faith. Without faith there is no love to God, and unless we know what the will of God

towards us is; viz., that he will remit unto us our sins by and for the sake of Christ, conversion will never be begun in us, neither as its respects the mortification of the old man, nor as it respects the quickening of the new: for by faith the heart is purified. (Acts 15: 9.) Without faith we can have no true joy or delight in God; without faith we cannot love God; and whatsoever is not of faith, is sin. (Rom. 14: 23.) All good works proceed from faith, as their fountain. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 5: 1.)

The causes which contribute to our conversion are the cross, with the chastisements inflicted upon ourselves and others; also the benefits, punishments and example of others, &c. "Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke." "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Jer. 31: 18. Ps. 119: 71. Matt. 5: 16.) *The subject, or matter in which* conversion is grounded, is the understanding, the will, the heart, and all the affections of man in which a change is produced.

The form of conversion is the turning itself with all the circumstances that are connected with it, which includes, 1. As it respects the mind and understanding, a correct judgment of God, together with his will and works. 2. As it respects the will, a sincere and earnest desire to avoid those falls and things which offend God, with a steady purpose to obey him, according to all his commandments. 3. As it respects the heart, new and holy desires and affections in accordance with the divine law. 4. As it respects the external actions and life, rectitude and obedience begun, according to the law of God. *The object of conversion* is, 1. Sin, or disobedience, which is the thing from which we are converted. 2. Righteousness, or new obedience, which is the thing to which we are converted. *The chief end of conversion* is the glory of God; the next end, which is subordinate to the glory of God, is our good, which consists in our blessedness and enjoyment of eternal life. The conversion of others is another end, still less principal, than those just mentioned. "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Luke 22: 32. Matt. 5: 16.)

The questions respecting Pelagianism are here properly in place; *Whether a man can convert himself without the grace of the Holy Spirit:* and, *Whether a man can, by the exercise of his free power of choice, prepare himself for the reception of divine grace.* Pelagius maintained the first, in opposition to what the Scriptures most plainly affirm. "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned." "It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." (Jer. 31: 18. Phil. 2: 13. Matt. 7: 18.) The Schoolmen and Papists at this day defend the last proposition respecting Pelagianism, in opposition to the explicit declarations of the word of God just cited, and also in contradiction to what Christ himself affirms, when he says, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John 6: 44.) Thomas Aquinas attributes a certain preparation to the free-will of man, but not conversion. He speaks however of this preparation, as though it contributed to the grace of conversion, which it does by

the gracious aid of God, moving us inwardly. Vide sum. theol. partis primæ, parte secunda, quæst. 109, ad 6.

V. What are the effects of Conversion?

The effects of conversion are, 1. A true and ardent love to God, and our neighbor. 2. An earnest desire to obey God, without any exception, according to all his commandments. 3. All good works, or new obedience itself. 4. A desire to convert others, and bring them in the way of salvation. *In a word*, the fruits of true repentance are the duties of piety towards God, and of charity towards our neighbor.

VI. Is Conversion perfect in this life?

Our conversion to God is not perfect in this life, but is here continually advancing, until it reaches the perfection which is proposed in the life to come. "We know in part." (1 Cor. 13: 9.) All the complaints and prayers of the saints are confirmations of this truth. "Cleanse thou me from secret faults." "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." (Ps. 19: 13. Rom. 7: 24.) The conflict which is continually going on in those who are converted, bears testimony to the same truth. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh," &c. (Gal. 5: 17.) The same thing may be said of the exhortations of the prophets and apostles, in which they exhort those who are converted to turn more fully unto God. "He that is righteous, let him be righteous still, and he that is holy, let him be holy still." (Rev. 22: 11.) We may also establish the same thing in the following manner: Neither the mortification of the flesh, nor the quickening of the Spirit, is absolute or perfect in the saints in this life. Therefore, neither is conversion, which consists of these two parts, perfect. As it respects the mortification of the old man, the case is clear, and does not admit of doubt that it is not perfect in this life; because the saints do not only continually strive against the lust of the flesh, but they also often for a time yield, and give over in this conflict — often do they sin, fall and offend God, although they do not defend their sins, but detest, deplore, and endeavor to avoid them. As it regards the imperfection of the quickening of the new man, the same conflict is a sufficient testimony; and surely as our knowledge is now only in part, the renovation of the will and heart must also be imperfect: for the will follows the knowledge which we have.

There are two plain reasons why the will, in the case of those who are converted, tends imperfectly to the good in this life: 1. Because the renovation of our nature is never made perfect in this life, neither as it respects our knowledge of God, nor the inclination which we have to obey him. The single complaint and acknowledgment which the apostle Paul made is a sufficient proof of what we have just said. "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh dwelleth no good thing," &c. (Rom. 7: 18, 19.) 2. Because those who are converted are not always governed by the Holy Spirit, but are sometimes for a season deserted by God, either for the purpose of trying, or chastising, or humbling them; yet they are nevertheless brought to repentance, so as not to perish. "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." (Mark 9: 24.)

But why does God not perfect conversion in the case of his people in this life, seeing that he is able to effect it? The reasons are, 1. That the saints may be humbled and exercised in faith, patience, prayer and wrestling against the flesh, and that they may not boast of their perfection, thinking of themselves more highly than they ought, but daily pray; "Enter not into judgment with thy servant." "Forgive us our sins." (Ps. 143: 2. Matt. 6: 12.) 2. That they may press forward more and more unto perfection, and desire it more earnestly. That, trampling the world under their feet, they may run with greater alacrity in the Christian course, and aspire after those joys that are laid up in heaven, knowing that it will not be until then that they shall fully enjoy their promised inheritance. "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." "Mortify, therefore, your members which are upon the earth." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him." (Col. 3: 2, 3, 5. John 3: 2.)

Concerning this imperfection Calvin writes in the following expressive language: "*This restoration is not accomplished in a single moment, or day, or year; but by continual, and sometimes even slow advances, the Lord destroys the carnal corruptions of his chosen, purifies them from all pollution, and consecrates them as temples to himself; renewing all their senses to real purity, that they may employ their whole life in the exercise of repentance, and know that this warfare will be terminated only in death.*" Inst. lib. 3. cap. 3. sec. 9. The sections following the one from which we have quoted, down to the fifteenth, may also be read to advantage, in which there is a disputation learnedly set forth against the Cathari and Anabaptists, in reference to the remains of sin which cleave to the godly as long as they remain in the flesh.

VII. In what does the conversion of the godly differ from the repentance of the ungodly?

The term repentance is used in reference to the ungodly as well as to the godly, because there are certain things in which they agree, as in a knowledge of sin, and sorrow on account of it. As it respects other things, however, there is a wide difference. They differ, 1. *In the moving cause of* repentance, or in the sorrow which is felt. The wicked are sorrowful, not on account of having offended God, but merely because of the punishment which they have brought upon themselves, and which necessarily attaches itself to the violation of God's law. If it were not for this, they would never manifest any sorrow for sin. So Cain was sorrowful merely on account of the punishment which God inflicted upon him for his sin. "My iniquity" (that is the punishment of my iniquity) "is greater than I can bear. Behold thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth," &c. The godly, however, do, indeed, dread the punishment of sin, but they are pained and grieved more particularly on account of sin itself, and the offence which they have committed against God. So it was in the case of David: "Against thee, thee only have I sinned: my sin is ever before me." (Ps. 51: 3, 4.) So it was also in the case of Peter, who wept bitterly on account of having offended Christ. The sorrow of Judas, however, did not arise on account of the evil of sin,

but merely on account of the punishment which followed his crime. Horace expresses this distinction in the following language: (lib. 1. epist. 16.)

Oderunt peccare boni, virtutis amore,
Tu nihil admittes in te, formidine pœnæ.

2. The repentance of the godly differs from that of the ungodly as it respects *the efficient cause of it.* The repentance of the ungodly proceeds from distrust and despair, so that their despair, disquietude and hatred to God increases. The repentance of the godly, however, proceeds from faith, or the confidence which they have in the mercy of God, and in a gracious reconciliation with him by and for the sake of Christ.

3. *They differ in form.* The repentance of the godly is a turning to God from the devil, sin and their old nature; because they do not only sorrow, but also encourage themselves by exercising confidence in the mediator—they confide in Christ, rejoice in God, and trust in him saying with David, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." (Ps. 51 : 7.) The repentance of the ungodly is a turning away from God to the devil, to hatred and repining against God, and to despair.

4. *They differ in their effects.* The repentance of the godly is followed by new obedience; and in proportion to the depth of their repentance is the old man mortified in them, and the desire of righteousness increased. But the repentance of the ungodly is not followed by new obedience; but they continue in sin and return to their vomit, although for a time they feigned to repent of their sins, as Ahab did. They are, indeed, mortified, and destroyed, but the corruption of their nature is not subdued: yea, by how much the more they repent, by so much the more is hatred, distrust, and aversion to God increased in them, so that they are continually being brought more and more under the power and dominion of Satan.

Question 91. But what are good works?

Answer. Only those which proceed from a true faith, are performed according to the law of God, and to his glory, and not such as are founded on our imaginations, or the institutions of men.

EXPOSITION.

The doctrine concerning good works belongs properly to this Question of the Catechism, concerning which we must enquire particularly:

I. *What are good works?*
II. *How may they be performed?*
III. *Are the works of the saints pure and perfectly good?*
IV. *How can our works please God since they are only imperfectly good?*
V. *Why must we perform good works?*
VI. *Do your good works merit any thing in the sight of God?*

I. What are good works?

Good works are such as are performed according to the law of God, such as proceed from a true faith, and are directed to the glory of God.

Three things, therefore, claim our attention in the exposition of this question: 1. The conditions necessary to constitute a work good in the sight of God. 2. The difference between the works of the regenerate and the unregenerate. 3. In what respect, or how far the moral works of the ungodly are sins.

First, that a work may be good and pleasing in the sight of God these three conditions are necessary:

1. It must be commanded by God. No creature has the right, or power to institute the worship of God. But good works (we speak of moral good) and the worship of God are the same. Moral good differs widely from natural good, inasmuch as all actions, in as far as they are actions, including even those of the wicked, are naturally good; but all actions are not morally good, or in accordance with the justice of God. This condition excludes all will-worship, as well as the figment of good intentions, as when men do evil that good may come, or when they perform works founded upon their own imaginations, which they endeavor to thrust upon God in the place of worship, which, indeed, are not evil in themselves, but yet are not commanded by God. It is not sufficient for the worship of God, that a work be not evil, or not prohibited: it must also be commanded by God, according to what the Scriptures declare, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." "Walk in my statutes." "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (1 Sam. 15: 22. Ez. 20: 19. Matt. 15: 9.)

But some one may object and say, that works of indifference, such as may be done, or left undone, are not commanded by God, and yet many of them are pleasing to him; to which we reply that they are not pleasing to God in themselves, but by an accident, in as far as they partake of the general nature of love, and in as far as they are performed for the purpose of avoiding offence, and for the sake of contributing to the salvation of our fellow men. In this respect they are commanded by God in general, although not specially.

2. That a work may be good it must proceed from a true faith, which rests upon the merit and intercession of Christ, and from which we may know that we, together with our works, are acceptable to God for the sake of the mediator. To do any thing from a true faith is, 1. To believe that we are acceptable to God for the sake of the satisfaction of Christ. 2. That our obedience itself is pleasing to God, both because it is commanded by him, and because the imperfection which attaches itself to it is made acceptable to God for the sake of the same satisfaction of Christ on account of which God is well pleased with us. Without faith it is impossible for any one to please God. Nor is the faith, by which any one may assure himself, that God wills and commands any particular work sufficient; for if this were all that is necessary, then the wicked, who know and do what God wills, would also act from faith. To act from a true faith, however, includes much more than this, because it includes in itself historical faith, and what is the most important of all, it applies unto itself the promise of the gospel. The Scriptures speak of this true faith in the following references: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Rom. 14: 23. Heb. 11: 6.) Nor is it difficult to perceive the reason and force of what is here affirmed; because without faith there is no love to God, and consequently no love to our neighbor.

Every work now that does not proceed from love to God is hypocrisy, yea a reproach and contempt of God; for he who has the presumption to do any thing, whether it be pleasing to God or not, despises God, and casts a reproach upon him. Nor is it possible for us to have a good conscience without faith; and what is not done with a good conscience cannot please God.

3. That a work may be good, it must be referred principally to the honor and glory of God. Honor embraces love, reverence, obedience and gratitude. Hence, to do any thing to the honor of God, is to do it, that we may testify our love, reverence and obedience to God, and that for the sake of showing our thankfulness for the benefits which we have received. There is a necessity that our works, in order that they may be good and acceptable to God, should be referred to the divine glory, and not to our own praise or advantage; otherwise they will not proceed from the love of God, but from a desire to advance our own selfish interests, and will thus be mere hypocrisy. God must, therefore, be respected first whenever we do any thing: nor must we care what men may say, whether they praise or reproach us, if we have the assurance that we please God in what we do, according to what the Apostle says, "Do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10: 31.) Yet we may at the same time lawfully and profitably desire and seek true glory, according as it is written, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5: 16.)

Briefly, *faith* is required in good works, because if we are not firmly persuaded that our works are pleasing to God, they proceed from contempt of God. The divine *command* is necessary, because faith has respect to the word of God. Inasmuch, therefore, as there cannot be any faith apart from the word, there can likewise be no good works independent of it. Finally, it is necessary that whatever we do, be referred *to the glory of God*, because, if we seek our own praise, or advantage in what we do, our works cannot please God.

By these conditions we exclude from the category of good works all those works, 1. Which are sins in themselves, being contrary to the divine law, and the will of God as revealed in his word. 2. Also those which are not opposed to the divine law, which in themselves are neither good nor evil, being actions of indifference, but which may, nevertheless, become evil by an accident. For works which are not opposed to the divine law, and which are not commanded by God, but by men, become evil and sinful when they are done with the conceit and expectation of worshipping God, or with offence and injury to our neighbor. Works of this character are deficient as it respects the first two conditions which we have specified as being indispensably necessary to constitute an action good in the sight of God. 3. Those works which are good in themselves, and which are commanded by God; but which, nevertheless, become sins by accident, in that they are not performed lawfully, not being done in the manner, nor with the design which God requires; that is, they do not proceed from a true faith, and are not done with the end that God may be glorified thereby. Works of this character are deficient in the last two conditions specified as necessary in order that our action may be pleasing to God.

Secondly, the works of the regenerate and the unregenerate differ, in this, that the good works of the regenerate are done according to the conditions which we have here specified; whilst those of the unregenerate,

although God may have commanded them, do, nevertheless, not proceed from faith, and are not joined with internal obedience; but are done without sincerity, and are, therefore, works of hypocrisy: and, as they do not spring from a right cause, which is faith, so they are nor directed to the glory of God which is the chief end to which all our actions ought to be referred. The actions of the unregenerate do not, therefore, deserve to be called good works.

Thirdly, the difference which exists between the works of the righteous and the wicked, goes to prove that the moral works of the wicked are sins, but yet not such sins as those which are in their own nature opposed to the law of God: for these are sins in themselves, and according to their very nature, whilst the moral works of the wicked are sins merely by an accident; viz., on account of some defect, either because they do not proceed from a true faith, or are not done to the glory of God. This consequence, therefore, is of no force: The good works of the heathen and such as are unregenerate, are sins. Therefore they are all to be avoided and condemned: this consequence, we say, is not legitimate, because it is only the defects which attach themselves to these works, that are to be avoided and guarded against, as we have shown, in the former part of this work, when treating the subject of sin.

A Table of Good Works.

- Of good works some are,
  - 1. *Truly good*, which, according to the definition of good works, are done.
    - 1. According to the command of God.
    - 2. Of faith.
    - 3. To the glory of God.
    - These are either
      - *Perfect*, as the works of angels, of man before the fall, and in the life to come.
      - *Imperfect*, as the works of the regenerate in this life.
  - 2. *Apparently good*, which include such as are,
    - 1. *Commanded by God*, and are in their own nature good, but become evil by an accident, not being done in the manner, nor with the end with which they ought to be performed.
    - 2. *Commanded by men*, for the sake of religion, such as the traditions, the counsels, and precepts of the Pharisees and Papists. (Matt. 15: 9.) "In vain do they worship me," &c.

II. How may good works be performed?

The explanation of this question is necessary on account of the Pelagians, who affirm that the unregenerate may also, as well as the regenerate, perform good works; and also on account of the Papists and semi-Pelagians who imagine certain preparatory works of free-will. Good works are possible only by the grace and assistance of the Holy Spirit, and that by the regenerate alone, whose hearts have been truly regenerated by the Spirit of God, through the preaching of the gospel, and that not only in their first conversion and regeneration, but also by the perpetual and constant influence and direction of the same Spirit, who works in them a knowledge of sin, faith and a desire of new obedience, and also daily increases and confirms more and more the same gifts in them. St.

Jerome endorses this doctrine when he says, "*Let him be accursed, who says that it is possible to render obedience to the law, without the grace of the Holy Spirit.*" Without the grace and continual direction of the Holy Spirit, even the most holy persons on earth can do nothing but sin, as is evident from the examples of David, Peter, and others. Yea, without regeneration, no part of any work that is good in the sight of God, can ever be begun, inasmuch as we are all by nature evil and dead in sin. (Matt. 7: 11. Eph. 2: 1.) "All our righteousnesses," says the prophet Isaiah, in which declaration he comprehends both himself and the most holy amongst men, "are as filthy rags." (Is. 64: 6.) Now if nothing but sin is found before God in the saints, what will that be which is found in those who are unregenerated? What good these are able to perform, the apostle Paul describes in a most graphic manner, in the first and second chapters of his Epistle to the Romans. That the unregenerate are unable to perform such works as are acceptable to God, is also taught in the following passages of Scripture: "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." "Without me ye can do nothing." "It is God, which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Matt. 7: 18. Jer. 13: 23. John, 15: 5. Phil. 2: 13.) Without the righteousness of Christ imputed unto us, we are altogether unclean and abominable in the sight of God, and all our works are as dung. But the righteousness of Christ is not imputed unto us before our conversion. It is impossible, therefore, either that we, or our works should be pleasing to God before our conversion. Faith is the cause of good works. Faith comes from God: Therefore good works which are the fruits of faith, are from God; neither can they be before faith and conversion, or else the effect would be before its cause.

It is asked by some, in connection with this subject, are there not works that are preparatory to conversion? To which we reply, that if by preparatory works are meant such as are the occasion of repentance, or which God uses for the purpose of effecting repentance in us, which may be said to be true of the outward deportment and discipline of the life, in as far as it is in accordance with the divine law; hearing, reading and meditating upon the word of God; also the cross, and adverse circumstances;—if such works as these are meant, we may admit that there are such works as are preparatory. But if by *preparatory works* are meant works which are performed according to the law before conversion, by which, as by men's good efforts, God is enticed and moved to grant true conversion, as well as his other gifts, to those who do these things, we deny that there are any such works; because, according to the declaration of the Apostle Paul, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Rom. 14: 23.) The Papists call such works *merits of congruity*, as if they would say that they are indeed such as are imperfect in themselves and deserve nothing, but on account of which it may seem proper for the mercy of God to grant unto men conversion and eternal life. But God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and not upon those who deserve mercy. (Rom. 9: 18.) No one deserves anything of God, but punishment, and banishment from his presence. "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; for we have done that which was our duty to do." (Luke 17: 10.)

III. Are the works of the regenerate perfectly good?

The works of the saints are not perfectly good or pure in this life: 1. Because even those who are regenerated do many things which are evil, which are sins in themselves, on account of which they are guilty in the sight of God, and deserve to be cast into everlasting punishment. Thus, Peter denied Christ thrice; David committed adultery, slew Uriah, attempted to conceal his wickedness, numbered the children of Israel, &c. The law now declares, "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." (Deut. 27: 26.). 2. Because they omit doing many good things which they ought to do according to the law. 3. Because the good works which they perform are not so perfectly good and pure as the law requires; for they are always marred with defects, and polluted with sins. The perfect righteousness which the law requires is wanting, even in the best works of the saints. The reason of this is easily understood, inasmuch as faith, regeneration, and the love of God and our neighbor, from which good works proceed, continue imperfect in us in this life. As the cause is, therefore, imperfect, it is impossible that the effects which flow from this cause should be perfect. "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind." (Rom. 7: 23.) This is the reason why the works of the godly cannot stand in the judgment of God. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." (Ps. 143: 2. Deut. 27: 26.) Inasmuch, therefore, as all our works are imperfect, it becomes us to acknowledge and lament our sinfulness and infirmity, and press forward so much the more towards perfection.

From what has now been said, it is evident that the figment, or conceit of the Monks in reference to works of supererogation—by which they understand such works as are done over and above what God and the law require from them, is full of impiety; for it makes God a debtor to man. Yea, it is a blasphemous doctrine; for Christ himself has said: "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; for we have done that which was our duty to do." (Luke 17: 10.)

Obj. 1. But it is said, Luke 10: 35: "Whatsoever thou spendest more, when I came again I will repay thee." Therefore there are at least some works of supererogation. Ans. It is a sufficient reply to this objection to remark, that in the interpretation of parables we must be careful not to press every minute circumstance too closely: for that which is similar is not altogether the same. The Samaritan says, *Whatsoever thou spendest more*, not in reference to God, but to the man that was bruised and wounded.

Obj. 2. Paul says, 1 Cor. 7: 25: "Concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, *yet I give my judgment.*" Therefore judgment or advice may be given concerning things not commanded or required. Ans. But Paul's meaning is, I give my advice, that it is suitable and profitable for this life, but not that it merits eternal life.

Obj. 3. But Christ said, Matt. 19: 21: "If thou wilt *be perfect*, go and sell what thou hast," &c. Therefore there are certain directions, which, being followed, make those who comply therewith perfect. Ans.

This is a special command, by which Christ designed to call this proud young man to humility, to the love of his neighbor, and to the office of an apostle in Judea. We may also remark, that Christ did not require from him supererogation, but perfection; which requirement he made in order that he might bring him to see his great deficiency.

IV. How can our Good Works please God, since they are only imperfectly good?

If our works were not pleasing to God, they would be performed to no purpose. We must, therefore, know in what way it is that they please God. As they are imperfect in themselves, and defiled in many respects, they cannot of themselves please God, on account of his extreme justice and rectitude. Yet they are, nevertheless, acceptable to God in Christ the Mediator, through faith, or on account of the merit and satisfaction of Christ imputed unto us by faith, and on account of his intercession with the Father in our behalf. For just as we ourselves do not please God in ourselves, but in his Son, so our works being imperfect and unholy in themselves, are acceptable to God on account of the righteousness of Christ, which covers all their imperfection or impurity, so that it does not appear before God. It is necessary that the person who performs good works should be acceptable to God; then the works of the person are also accepted; otherwise, when the person is without faith, the best works are but an abomination before God, inasmuch as they are altogether hypocritical. As now the person is acceptable to God, so are the works. But the person is acceptable to God on account of the Mediator; that is, by the imputation of the merit and righteousness of Christ, with which the person is covered as with a garment in the presence of God. Hence the works of the person are also pleasing to God, for the sake of the Mediator. God does not look upon and examine our righteousness and imperfect works as they are in themselves, according to the rigor of his law in respect to which he would rather condemn them; but he beholds and considers them in his Son. It is for this reason that God is said to have had respect to Abel and his offering, viz: in his Son, in whom Abel believed; for it was by faith that he presented his sacrifice. (Gen. 4: 4. Heb. 11: 4.) So Christ is also called our *High Priest*, by whom our works are offered unto God. He is also called *the altar*, on which our prayers and works being placed, they are acceptable unto God, which otherwise would be detestable in his sight. It follows, therefore, that every defect and every imperfection respecting ourselves and our works is covered, and, as it were, repaired in the judgment of God, by the perfect satisfaction of Christ. It is in view of this that Paul says, "That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." (Phil. 3: 9.)

V. Why Good Works are to be done, or why are they necessary?

We have already, under the 86th Question, enumerated certain moving causes of good works which properly belong here; such as the connection which holds necessarily between regeneration and justification, the glory

of God, the proof of our faith and election, and a good example by which others are won to Christ. These causes may be very appropriately dwelt upon to a much greater extent, if, having reduced them to three principal heads, we say that good works are to be performed by us for the sake of *God, ourselves and our neighbor.*

I. Good works are to be done *in respect to God*, 1. That the glory of God our heavenly Father, may be manifested. The manifestation of the glory of God is the chief end why God commands and wills that good works should be performed by us, that we may honor him by our good works, and that others seeing them may glorify our Father which is in heaven, as it is said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5 : 16.)

2. That we may render unto God the obedience which he requires, or on account of the command of God. God requires the commencement of obedience in this life, and the perfection of it in the life to come. "This is my commandment, That ye love one another." "This is the will of God even your sanctification." "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." "Yield your members as instruments of righteousness unto God," (John 15 : 12. 1 Thes. 4 : 3. Rom. 6 : 18, 13.)

3. That we may thus render unto God the gratitude which we owe unto him. It is just and proper that we should love, worship and reverence him by whom we have been redeemed, and from whom we have received the greatest benefits, and that we should declare our love and gratitude by our obedience and good works. God deserves our obedience and worship on account of the benefits which he confers upon us. We do not merit his benefits by anything that we do. Hence our gratitude, which shows itself by our obedience and good works, is due unto God for his great benefits. "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." "Ye are an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. (Rom. 12 : 1. Pet. 2 : 5, 9, 20.)

II. Good works are to be done *on our own account*, 1. That we may thereby testify our faith, and be assured of its existence in us by the fruits which we produce in our lives. "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit." "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, unto the praise and glory of God." "Faith without works is dead." (Matt. 7 : 17. Phil. 1 : 11. James 2 : 17.) It is by our good works, therefore, that we know that we possess true faith, because the effect is not without its own proper cause, which is always known by its effect; so that if we are destitute of good works and new obedience, we are hypocrites, and have an evil conscience instead of true faith; for true faith (which is never wanting in all the fruits which are peculiar to it,) as a fruitful tree produces good works, obedience and repentance; which fruits distinguish true faith from that faith which is merely historical and temporary, as well as from hypocrisy itself.

2. That we may be assured of the fact that we have obtained the forgiveness of sins through Christ, and that we are justified for his sake. Justification and regeneration are benefits which are connected and knit together in such a way as never to be separated from each other. Christ

obtained both for us at the same time, viz: the forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit, who through faith excites in us the desire of good works and new obedience.

3. That we may be assured of our election and salvation. "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." (2 Pet. 1: 10.) This cause naturally grows out of the preceding one; for God out of his mercy chose from everlasting only those who are justified on account of the merit of his Son. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified." (Rom. 8: 30.) We are, therefore, assured of our election by our justification; and that we are justified in Christ, (which benefit is never granted unto the elect without sanctification,) we know from faith; of which we are, again, assured by the fruits of faith, which are good works, new obedience and true repentance.

4. That our faith may be exercised, nourished, strengthened and increased by good works. Those who indulge in unclean lusts and desires against their consciences cannot have faith, and so are destitute of a good conscience and of confidence in God as reconciled and gracious; for it is only by faith that we obtain a sense of the divine favor towards us and a good conscience. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." "I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee." (Rom. 8: 13. 2 Tim. 1: 6.)

5. That we may adorn and commend our profession, life and calling by our good works. "I beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called." (Eph. 4: 1.)

6. That we may escape temporal and eternal punishment. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." "Thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity." (Matt. 7: 19. Rom. 8: 13. Ps. 39: 11.)

7. That we may obtain from God those temporal and spiritual rewards, which, according to the divine promise, accompany good works both in this and in a future life. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." (1 Tim. 4: 8.) And if God did not desire that the hope of reward, and the fear of punishment should be moving causes of good works, he would not use them as arguments in the promises and threatenings which he addresses unto us in his word.

III. Good works are to be done *for the sake of our neighbor*, 1. That we may be profitable unto our neighbor, and edify him by our example and godly conversation. "All things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might, through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God," &c. "Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." (2 Cor. 4: 15. Phil. 1: 24.)

2. That we may not be the occasion of offences and scandal to the cause of Christ. "Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh." "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." (Matt. 18: 7. Rom. 2: 24.)

3. That we may win the unbelieving to Christ. "And when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke 22: 32.)

The question, *whether good works are necessary to salvation*, belongs properly to this place. There have been some who have maintained simply and positively, that good works are necessary to salvation, whilst others,

again, have held that they are pernicious and injurious to salvation. Both forms of speech are ambiguous and inappropriate, especially the latter; because it seems not only to condemn confidence, but also the desire of performing good works. It is, therefore, to be rejected. The former expression must be explained in this way; that good works *are necessary to salvation*, not as a cause to an effect, or as if they merited a reward, but as a part of salvation itself, or as an antecedent to a consequent, or as a means without which we cannot obtain the end. In the same way we may also say, that good works are necessary to righteousness or justification, or in them that are to be justified, viz: as a consequence of justification, with which regeneration is inseparably connected. But yet we would prefer not to use these forms of speech, 1. Because they are ambiguous. 2. Because they breed contentions, and give our enemies room for caviling. 3. Because these expressions are not used in the Scriptures with which our forms of speech should conform as nearly as possible. We may more safely and correctly say, *That good works are necessary in them that are justified, and that are to be saved.* To say that good works are necessary in them that are to be justified, is to speak ambiguously, because it may be so understood as if they were required before justification, and so become a cause of our justification. Augustin has correctly said: "*Good works do not precede them that are to be justified, but follow them that are justified.*" We may, therefore, easily return an answer to the following objection: That is necessary to salvation without which no one can be saved. But no one who is destitute of good works can be saved, as it is said in the 87th Question. Therefore, good works are necessary to salvation. We reply to the major proposition, by making the following distinction: That without which no one can be saved is necessary to salvation, viz: as a part of salvation, or as a certain antecedent necessary to salvation, in which sense we admit the conclusion; but not as a cause, or as a merit of salvation. We, therefore, grant the conclusion of the major proposition if understood in the sense in which we have just explained it. For good works are necessary to salvation, or, to speak more properly, in them that are to be saved (for it is better thus to speak for the sake of avoiding ambiguity,) as a part of salvation itself; or, as an antecedent of salvation, but not as a cause or merit of salvation.

VI. Do our Good Works merit any thing in the sight of God?

This question naturally grows out of the preceding one, as the fourth grew out of the third. For when we say that we obtain rewards from God by our own good works, men immediately conclude that our good works must merit something at the hands of God. We must know, therefore, that our good works are necessary, and that they are also to be done for the rewards which are consequent thereon; but that they are, nevertheless, not meritorious, by which we mean that they deserve nothing from God, not even the smallest particle of spiritual or temporal blessings. The reasons of this are most true and evident.

1. Our works are imperfect, both in respect to their parts and degrees. As it respects *the parts* of our works, they are imperfect, for the reason that we omit many good things which the law prescribes, and do many evil things which the law prohibits; and always mingle much that is evil with

the good we do, as both Scripture and experience testify. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary, the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. 5: 17.) Works, now, that are imperfect not only merit nothing, but are even condemned in the judgment of God. "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. (Deut. 27: 26.) Our works are also imperfect *in degree*, because the best works of the saints are unclean and defiled in the sight of God, not being performed by those who are perfectly regenerated, nor with that love to God and our neighbor which the law requires. The prophet Isaiah declares even in reference to good works, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Is. 64: 6.) So the apostle Paul passes the same judgment in regard to his own works, saying, "I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things; and do count them but dung that I may win Christ." (Phil. 3: 8.) It is in this way, now, that all the saints speak and judge concerning their own righteousness and merits.

2. No creature, performing even the best works, can merit any thing at the hand of God, or bind him to give any thing as though it were due from him, and according to the order of divine justice. The Apostle assigns the reason of this when he says, "Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again." "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own." (Rom. 11: 35. Matt. 20: 15.) We deserve our preservation no more than we did our creation. God was not bound to create us; nor is he bound to preserve those whom he has created. But he did, and does, both of his own free-will and good pleasure. God receives no benefit from us, nor can we confer any thing upon our Creator. Now, where there is no benefit, there is no merit; for merit presupposes some benefit received.

3. Our works are all due unto God; for all creatures are bound to render worship and gratitude to the Creator, so that if we were even never to sin, yet we could not render unto God the worship and gratitude which is due from us. "When ye have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do." (Luke 17: 10.)

4. If we do any works which are good, these works are not ours, but God's, who produces them in us by his Holy Spirit. "It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." "What hast thou, that thou didst not receive?" (Phil. 2: 13. 1 Cor. 4: 7.) We are by nature the children of wrath — dead in trespasses and sins — evil trees, which cannot produce good fruit. (Eph. 2: 1, 3. Matt. 7: 18.) If we are by nature evil trees, God must by his grace make us good trees, and produce good fruit in us, as it is said; "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2: 10.) Hence, if we perform any thing that is good, it is the gift of God, and not any merit on our part. It would, indeed, be foolish on the part of any one, if, when he were to receive a hundred florins as a present from a rich man, he should think he deserved a thousand for receiving the hundred, seeing that he is under obligations to the rich man for the gift which he has received, and not the rich man to him.

5. There is no proportion between our works, which are altogether imperfect, and those exceedingly great benefits which the Father freely grants unto us in his Son.

6. "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1 Cor. 1: 31.) But if we deserve the remission of our sins by our good works, we should then have something whereof to glory; nor should we attribute the glory of our salvation to God, as it is said, "If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God." (Rom. 4: 2.)

7. We are justified before we perform good works. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, the elder shall serve the younger: As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Rom. 9: 11–14.) We are, therefore, not justified before God at the time when we do good works, but we perform good works when we are justified.

8. The conceit of merit and justification by our good works is calculated to shake true Christian consolation, to disturb the conscience and lead men to doubt and despair in reference to their salvation. For when they hear the denunciation of the law, *cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them*, and consider their own imperfection, their conscience tells them that they can never perform all these things, so that they are continually led to cherish doubts, and to live in dread of the curse of the law. Faith, however, imparts sure and solid comfort to the conscience, because it grounds itself in the promise of God, which cannot disappoint the soul. "The inheritance is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." (Rom. 4: 16.)

9. If we were to obtain righteousness by our own works, the promise would then be made of none effect, and Christ would have died in vain.

10. If the conceit concerning the merit of good works be admitted, then there would not be one and the same method of salvation. Abraham and the Thief on the cross would have been justified differently, which might also be said of us. But there is only one way of salvation: "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." "There is one Mediator between God and men." "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism." "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (John 14: 6. 1 Tim. 2: 5. Eph. 4: 5. Heb. 13: 8. Acts 4: 12.)

11. Christ would not accomplish the whole of our salvation, and thus would not be a perfect Saviour if any thing were to be added by us to our righteousness by way of merit; for there would be as much detracted from his merit as would be added thereto from our merit. But Christ is our perfect Saviour, as the Scriptures sufficiently testify. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Neither is there salvation in any other." (Eph. 1: 7; 2: 8, 9. 1 John 1: 7. Acts 4: 12.)

Obj. Reward presupposes merit. God also calls those good things which he promises, and grants unto them that perform good works, rewards.

Therefore good works presuppose merit, and are meritorious in the sight of God. Ans. The major proposition, sometimes, holds true among men, but never with God; because no creature can merit any thing at the hands of God, seeing that he is indebted to no one. Yet they are, nevertheless, called the rewards of our good works in respect to God, because he, out of his mere grace, recompenses them. This recompense, however, is not due; for we can add nothing to God, neither does he stand in need of our works. Yea, something is rather added unto us by our good works; because they are a conformity of ourselves with God, and his benefits, by which we are bound to render gratitude to God, and not God to us. It is, therefore, not less absurd to say that we merit salvation at the hands of God, than if a certain one should say, Thou hast given me one hundred florins. Therefore thou oughtest to give me a thousand florins. Yet God commands us to perform good works, and promises a gracious reward to those who do them, as a father promises rewards to his children.

THIRTY-FOURTH LORD'S DAY.

OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Question 92. What is the law of God?

Answer. God spake all these words, *Exod.* 20, *Deut.* 5, saying: I am the Lord thy God, which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

FIRST COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

SECOND COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

THIRD COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy: six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not kill.

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not steal.

NINTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

TENTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man servant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

EXPOSITION.

The doctrine concerning the Law, which is the rule of good works, next claims our attention, in relation to which we shall enquire:

I. *What is the law in general?*
II. *What are the several parts of the divine law?*
III. *To what extent has Christ abrogated the law, and to what extent is it still in force?*
IV. *In what does the moral law differ from the gospel?*
V. *How is the Decalogue divided?*
VI. *What is the true meaning of the Decalogue, and of every commandment separately considered?*
VII. *To what extent can those who are regenerated keep the law?*
VIII. *What is the use of the law?*

We shall now proceed to the consideration of the first four questions here proposed. The fifth belongs to the 93d Question of the Catechism; the sixth, to the 94th, and those which follow, down to the 114th; the seventh, to the 114th, and the eighth to the 115th Question.

I. What is the law in general?

The term law (lex) is derived from lego, which means to read, to publish; or, from lego, which means to choose. The Hebrew *Thorah*, which means doctrine, agrees with the former derivation of the term; because laws are published in order that every one may read and learn them. It is for this reason that ignorance of the law does not excuse any one. Yea, those who are ignorant of the laws which have respect to them, sin in that they are ignorant. The Greek νομος, which comes from a word that means to distribute, to divide, agrees with the latter derivation of the term law; because the law imposes particular duties upon every one.

Law now, *in general*, is a rule, or precept, commanding things honest and just, requiring obedience from creatures endowed with reason, with a promise of reward in case of obedience, and with a threatening of punishment in case of disobedience. It is a *rule, or precept, commanding things honest and just*, otherwise it is no law. *Requiring obedience from creatures endowed with reason:* the law was not made for those who are not bound to obedience. *With a promise of reward in case of obedience;* the law graciously promises blessings to those who perform acceptable obedience; because no obedience can be meritorious in the sight of God.

Obj But the gospel also promises blessings freely. Therefore the law does not differ from the gospel. Ans. The law promises freely in one respect, and the gospel in another. The law promises freely upon the condition of obedience on our part; the gospel, on the other hand, promises freely without the works of the law. The gospel does not, indeed, promise blessings freely, independent of any condition whatever; but only without such a condition as that which the law lays down. *And with a threatening of punishment in case of disobedience;* otherwise the law would be an empty sound, and of no effect. Plato says: "*The law is a right form of government, which is directed to the best end, by means that are adapted thereto, threatening punishment upon transgressors, and promising rewards to the obedient.* The term law is also frequently improperly used to designate the course, and order which God has established in nature. In this sense the law, meaning the order of nature, requires that fruit be produced by a tree. And Paul still more improperly calls original sin, the law of sin, because as a law it leads us to the commission of sin.

II. What are the Parts of the law, and what their Differences?

Laws are divine and human. *Human laws* are such as are instituted by men, and which bind certain persons to certain external duties concerning which there is no express divine precept or prohibition with a promise of reward and threatening of punishment, corporal and temporal. Human laws are either civil or ecclesiastical. *Civil* are such positive laws as are instituted by magistrates, or by some corporation, or state, in reference to a certain order or class of actions to be observed in the state in contracts, trials, punishments, &c. *Ecclesiastical*, or ceremonial laws, are those which the church institutes in reference to the order which is to be observed in the ministry of the church, and which lay down certain prescriptions in reference to those things which contribute to the divine law.

Divine laws are those which God has instituted, which belong partly to angels, partly to men, and partly to certain classes of men. These do not only require external actions or obedience, but they also require internal qualities, actions and motives: nor do they merely propose temporal rewards and punishments; but also such as are spiritual and eternal. They are also the ends for which human laws are instituted. Of *divine laws* there are some that are eternal and unchangeable; whilst there are others that are changeable; yet only by God himself, who has instituted them.

The divine law is ordinarily divided, or considered as consisting of three parts; the moral, the ceremonial and the judicial.

The *moral law* is a doctrine harmonising with the eternal and unchangeable wisdom and justice of God, distinguishing right from wrong, known by

nature, engraven upon the hearts of creatures endowed with reason in their creation, and afterwards often repeated and declared by the voice of God through his servants, the prophets; teaching what God is and what he requires, binding all intelligent creatures to perfect obedience and conformity to the law, internal and external, promising the favor of God and eternal life to all those who render perfect obedience, and at the same time denouncing the wrath of God and everlasting punishment upon all those who do not render this obedience, unless remission of sins and reconciliation with God be secured for the sake of Christ the mediator.

Harmonising with the eternal and unchangeable wisdom of God: That the law is *eternal* is evident from this, that it remains one and the same from the beginning to the end of the world. We were also created, and have been redeemed by Christ and regenerated by the Holy Spirit, that we might keep this law, or love God and our neighbor as it requires, both in this and in the life to come. "I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning." (John 2: 7.)

Afterwards often repeated: God repeated the law of nature which was engraven upon the mind of man: 1. Because it was obscured and weakened by the fall. 2. Because many things were entirely obliterated and lost. 3. That what was still left in the mind of man might not be regarded as a mere opinion or notion, and so at length be lost.

Ceremonial laws were those which God gave through Moses in reference to ceremonies, or the external solemn ordinances which were to be observed in the public worship of God, with a proper attention to the circumstances which had been prescribed; binding the Jewish nation to the coming of the Messiah, and at the same time distinguishing them from all other nations; and that they might also be signs, symbols, types and shadows of spiritual things to be fulfilled in the New Testament by Christ. *Ceremonies* are external solemn actions which are often to be repeated in the same manner and with the same circumstance, and which have been instituted by God, or by men to be observed in the external worship of God, for the sake of order, propriety and signification. The ceremonies which have been instituted by God, constitute divine worship absolutely; whilst those which have been instituted by men, if they are good, merely contribute to divine worship.

The judicial laws were those which had respect to the civil order or government, and the maintenance of external propriety among the Jewish people according to both tables of the Decalogue; or it may be said that they had respect to the order and duties of magistrates, the courts of justice, contracts, punishments, fixing the limits of kingdoms, &c. These laws God delivered through Moses for the establishment and preservation of the Jewish commonwealth, binding all the posterity of Abraham, and distinguishing them from the rest of mankind until the coming of the Messiah; and that they might also serve as a bond for the preservation and government of the Mosaic polity, until the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh, that they might be certain marks by which the nation which was bound by them, might be distinguished from all other nations, and might at the same time be the means of preserving proper discipline and order, that so they might be types of the order which should be established in the kingdom of Christ.

All good laws, which alone deserve the name of laws, are to be traced *to*

the moral law as their source, which agrees in every respect with the Decalogue, and may also, by necessary consequence, be deduced from it, so that he who violates the one, violates the other likewise. As it respects *ceremonial and judicial laws*, however, whether they be divine or human, if they are only good, they do, indeed, agree with the Decalogue, but cannot be deduced from it by necessary consequence, as the moral law, but are subservient to it, as certain specifications of circumstances. From this we may easily perceive the difference which exists between these laws: for it is one thing to flow out of the Decalogue necessarily, and another thing to agree with it, and contribute to its observance. Yet this difference varies, because the government of the church and the state is not the same; nor do these have the same end, nor are they abrogated in the same way.

But the chief difference between these laws lies in their obligation, manifestation, duration and use. *The moral law* is known naturally, binds all men, and that perpetually; it is different, however, with the ceremonial and judicial law. *The moral law* requires obedience which is both internal and external; the others merely require that which is external. The precepts of the *moral law* are general, having respect to all men whoever they may be; the others are special, and do not thus apply to all men. The *precepts of the moral law* are the ends of the others; whilst they again are subservient to those which are moral. The ceremonial and civil laws were also types and figures of other things for which they were instituted; it is different, however, with the moral law. The moral law does not give place to the ceremonial; it, on the other hand, gives place to the moral.

We must also observe, in passing along, the difference which exists between the moral law, the natural law, and the Decalogue. *The Decalogue* contains the sum of the moral laws which are scattered throughout the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. *The natural, and moral law* were the same in man before the fall, when his nature was pure and holy. Since the fall, however, which resulted in the corruption and depravity of our nature, a considerable part of the natural law has become obscured and lost by reason of sin, so that there is only a small portion concerning the obedience which we owe to God still left in the human mind. It is for this reason that God repeated, and declared to the church the entire doctrine and true sense of his law, as contained in the Decalogue. The Decalogue is, therefore, the renewal and re-enforcing of the natural law, which is only a part of the Decalogue. This distinction, therefore, which we have made between the several parts of the divine law must be retained, both on account of the difference itself, that so the force and true sense of these laws may be understood, and that we may also have a correct knowledge and understanding of the abrogation and use of the law.

III. To what extent has Christ abrogated the Law, and to what extent is it still in force?

The ordinary and correct answer to this question is, that the ceremonial and judicial law, as given by Moses, has been abrogated in as far as it relates to obedience; and that the moral law has also been abrogated as it respects the curse, but not as it respects obedience. That *the ceremonial and judicial* laws have been so abrogated by the coming of Christ, that they

no longer bind any to obedience, and that they have not the appearance and force of laws in respect to the present time, is proven, 1. From the fact that the prophets even declared and foretold this abrogation in the Old Testament. "Christ shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek. (Dan. 9: 27. Ps. 110: 4.) 2. Christ and his Apostles, in different places in the New Testament, expressly assert this abrogation. (See Acts 7: 8. Heb. 7: 11—18; 8: 8—13.) Instead of adducing a number of testimonies in confirmation of this point, we shall merely cite the decree passed by the Apostles when assembled in Jerusalem: "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay upon you no greater burden, than these necessary things," &c. (Acts 15: 28, 29.) 3. When certain causes are once changed, the laws which are based upon these causes are also changed. One cause now of the ceremonial and judicial law was that the form of worship and civil polity which existed among the Jews, from whom the Messiah was to be born, might distinguish them from all other nations until the Messiah would come. Another cause was that they might be types of the Messiah and of his benefits. These causes now since the coming of the Messiah, have been done away with: for the Apostle declares that the middle wall of partition between the Jews and other nations has been broken down: "He is our Peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us," "For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. (Eph. 2: 14. Gal. 6: 15.) It is also every where taught in the New Testament Scriptures that the rites and ceremonies of the old dispensation have been fulfilled in Christ. "The Holy Ghost, this signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while the first tabernacle was yet standing." "The law and the prophets were until John." "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink," &c. (Heb. 9: 8. Luke 10: 16. Col. 2: 16.)

The Jews are wont to bring forward the following objections against the abrogation of the law: 1. The Mosaic ritual and the Jewish kingdom were to last forever; the former according to the command, the latter according to the promise of God. *Circumcision is an everlasting covenant. The Passover was to be observed for an ordinance forever. This is my rest forever. The sabbath is a perpetual covenant. Thy throne shall be established forever.* (Gen. 17: 13. Ex. 12: 24. Ps. 132: 14. Ex. 31: 16. Sam. 7: 16.) Therefore the form of religion and civil polity instituted by Moses, has not been abrogated by Christ. Ans. The chain of reasoning in this syllogism is incorrect, for it proceeds from that which is declared to be true in a certain respect, to that which is absolutely true. The major proposition speaks of an absolute perpetuity; whilst the minor speaks of a perpetuity that is limited, inasmuch as an unlimited continuance of the Jewish rites and kingdom is not promised in the above references, but one that was merely to continue until the coming of the Messiah who was to be heard after Moses. For the particle *Holam* signifies, every where in the Scriptures, not eternity, but the continuance of a long, though definite period of time. Thus it is said in Ex. 26: 6, "And he shall serve him forever," meaning until the year of jubilee, as we may easily prove, by a comparison of this declaration with the law respecting

the jubilee, as recorded in Lev. 25: 40. Again: We may also grant what is affirmed in the minor proposition, that an absolute perpetuity is promised; but this is a continuance, not of the types and shadows, but only of the things signified thereby, which are spiritual, the truth of which will continue forever in the church, even though the types and signs themselves be abolished by Christ. In this respect the signification of circumcision remains in force even to this day: so there is also a perpetual sabbath in the church, and it shall be perpetual in everlasting life: so also the kingdom of David is established forever in the throne of Christ.

Obj. 2. The worship which Ezekiel describes, from the fortieth chapter to the end of his prophecy, has respect to the kingdom of the Messiah, and is to be retained in it. But that worship is merely typical and ceremonial. Therefore a typical and ceremonial worship is to be retained in the kingdom of the Messiah; from which we may infer that the Jewish religion and polity was not to be done away with, but restored by the Messiah. Ans. The major of this syllogism, if understood absolutely, is not true; because whilst the prophet speaks of the kingdom of the Messiah, he does not prophesy concerning this alone: for he at the same time speaks of the restitution of the ceremonial worship in Judea, after their return from Babylon, and foretells that it would continue until the Messiah would come. We also deny the minor proposition; for the prophet, under the description of types, did not only promise the restoration of Jewish types, but he more particularly foretold and promised the spiritual condition and glory of the church under the reign of the Messiah, which should be commenced in this life, and perfected in the life to come; which may be proven by the following considerations: 1. The history of Ezra teaches that this restoration would not take place before the coming of Christ; neither will the other prophecies which are contained in the Old Testament, respecting the coming and reign of the Messiah in this world, allow us to believe that there will ever, even after the manifestation of the Son of God in the flesh, be such a glorious state and condition of the church on earth as the Jews dream of. Hence this restoration of Jerusalem, or the church, must be understood spiritually, or else we shall be compelled to admit, what is absurd, that this prophecy never has been, nor will be fulfilled. 2. The promise, in which the prophet declares that neither the house of Israel, nor their kings, would any more defile the holy name of God, must necessarily be understood in a spiritual sense, as referring to the perfection of the life to come. (Ex. 43: 7.) And it is by no means uncommon for the prophets to connect the commencement of the reign of Christ with the perfect establishment of it. 3. The *waters* issuing out of the temple cannot be understood of elementary water, but shadow forth and signify the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which were to be poured out in large measures in the kingdom of Christ. (Eph. 47: 1.) 4. Lastly, we have for our interpreter the Apostle John, who, in the twenty-first and second chapters of the book of Revelation, describes the spiritual and heavenly Jerusalem, by which is meant the glorified church of the New Testament, in words taken, as it were, from the description given by the prophet Ezekiel. This prophecy, therefore, affords no proof whatever in favor of the observance of Jewish rites in the kingdom of Christ.

Obj. 3. The best and most wholesome form of government is always to be retained. The form of government established among the Jews was

the best and most wholesome, for the reason that it was instituted by God. Therefore it is to be retained. Ans. There is here a fallacy in taking that to be absolutely true, which is true only in a certain respect. The form of government established among the Jews was the best, not absolutely, but only for that time, that country and nation: for there were many things in it adapted to the state and condition of that nation, country, time, and ceremonial worship, the observance of which would now neither be proper nor profitable, because the causes on account of which those laws were given to the Jews are now changed or removed; as giving a writing or bill of divorcement, marrying the widow of one's kindred, &c. God did not, for this reason, institute this form of government that all nations and ages might be bound by it; but only that his own people might, by this discipline, be separated for a time from the surrounding nations.

If any one should object and say, that if Christians are permitted to observe and conform to the laws of other nations, such as the Greeks or Romans, &c., much more ought we to observe those which were given by Moses, the servant of God; we readily grant the argument, if this observance is rendered without attaching to it the idea of necessity; or if these laws are observed, not because Moses commanded and enjoined them upon the Jewish nation, but because there are good reasons why we should now comply with them; and if these reasons should be changed, to retain the liberty of changing these enactments by public authority.

We have thus far spoken merely of the abrogation of the ceremonial and judicial law. We must now proceed to speak of the moral law.

The moral law has, as it respects one part, been abrogated by Christ; and as it respects another, it has not. It has been abrogated, as it respects the faithful, in two ways: 1. The curse of the law has been removed as it respects those who are justified by faith in Christ, in consequence of having his merits imputed unto them; or it may be said that the law has been abrogated as touching justification, because judgment is not pronounced in reference to us according to the law, but according to the gospel. The sentence of the law would condemn and give us over to destruction. Its dreadful language is, "In thy sight shall no man living be justified." (Ps. 143: 2.) The sentence of the gospel is different: its language is, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John 3; 36.) This abrogation of the law is the first and principal part of Christian liberty, of which it is said, "There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 8: 1; 6: 14.) 2. The law has been abrogated in reference to Christians, as it respects constraint. The law no longer forces and wrests obedience as a tyrant, or as a master compels a worthless servant to render obedience to his behests; because Christ commences in us by his Spirit a free and cheerful obedience, so that we willingly comply with whatever the law requires from us. The Apostle says, concerning this part of Christian liberty: "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 6: 14.) What this liberty is, the Apostle explains in the seventh chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. "The law is not made for a righteous man; but for the lawless and disobedient," &c. "Against such, there is no law." (1 Tim. 1: 9. Gal. 5: 23.)

Obj. The law and the prophets were until John. (Matt. 11: 13.) Hence if the law was then first abrogated, as it respects condemnation,

when Christ appeared in the flesh, it follows that the faithful who lived before the coming of Christ must have been under condemnation. Ans. The law was abrogated, as touching condemnation, no less to the faithful under the Old Testament, than to those who live under the New Testament: to the former as to efficacy and power; to the latter as to fulfillment and manifestation.

But the moral law, or Decalogue, has not been abrogated in as far as obedience to it is concerned. God continually, no less now than formerly, requires both the regenerate and the unregenerate to render obedience to his law. This may be proven: 1. *From the end* for which Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law. This was that he might make us, who were delivered from sin and the curse of the law, the temples of God; and not that we should persist in sin, and hatred to God. 2. We are bound to render obedience and gratitude to God in proportion to the number and greatness of the benefits which he confers upon us. But those who are united to Christ by faith, receive from the hands of God more and greater benefits than all others: for they do not merely enjoy, in common with others, the benefit of creation and preservation, but enjoy in addition to this the grace of regeneration and justification. Therefore we are more strongly bound to render obedience to the divine law than others, and that more after our regeneration and justification than before. 3. From the testimony of Scripture: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." (Matt. 5: 17.) This is spoken, indeed, of the whole law, but with a special reference to the moral law, which Christ has fulfilled in four respects:

1. *By his own righteousness and conformity with the law.* It behooved him to be perfectly righteous in himself, and to be conformable to the law according to each nature, that he might make satisfaction for us, as it is said: "For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," &c. (Heb. 7: 26.)

2. By enduring a punishment sufficient for our sins: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. 8: 3.)

3. Christ fulfills the law in us by his Spirit, by whom he renews us in the image of God. "Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Rom. 6: 6; 8: 11.)

4. Christ fulfilled the law by teaching it and restoring its true meaning and sense, which he did by freeing it from the corruptions and glosses of the Pharisees, as appears from his sermon on the mount, and from other portions of his teachings. If Christ, therefore, teaches and restores in us obedience to the law, he does not abolish the law in respect to obedience. Paul teaches the same thing when he asks: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." (Rom. 3: 31.)

The law now is established by faith in three ways: 1. *By confessing and approving* the sentence which it passes in reference to ourselves, that we do not render the obedience which is due from us to the law, and are, therefore, deserving of eternal condemnation. We also confess the same

thing by seeking righteousness without ourselves in Christ. 2. *By satisfaction.* By faith we apply unto ourselves the satisfaction of Christ, which is equivalent to everlasting punishment, which the law requires from us in case we do not render a full and perfect obedience to its claims. It is by means of this satisfaction now that we are justified, not indeed by the law, nor yet contrary to the law, but *with* the law, which Christ has fully satisfied by his perfect obedience in our room and stead. 3. *By new obedience.* This obedience is commenced in us in this life by the Spirit of Christ, and will be perfected in the life to come. *The same thing may be expressed more briefly, thus:* The law is established by faith, both because the doctrine concerning the righteousness which is by faith, teaches that we are righteous, not in ourselves, and that we cannot be justified unless the perfect satisfaction which the law requires intervene, and also because the restoration of obedience to the law in us is brought about by faith.

The sum of what we have now said, touching the abrogation of the law is this: That the ceremonial and judicial laws instituted by Moses have been entirely abolished and done away with by the coming of Christ, as far as it relates to obligation and obedience on our part. The moral law, however, has not been abolished as it respects obedience, but only as it respects the curse, justification and constraint.

The objections of the Antinomians, Libertines, and others of a similar cast, who contend that the moral law has no respect to Christians, and that it ought not to be taught in the church of Christ, will be noticed when we come to the exposition of the 115th Question of the Catechism where we shall speak of the use of the law.

V. In what does the Law differ from the Gospel?

The exposition of this question is necessary for a variety of considerations, and especially that we may have a proper understanding of the law and the gospel, to which a knowledge of that in which they differ greatly contributes. According to the definition of the law, which says, that it promises rewards to those who render perfect obedience; and that it promises them freely, inasmuch as no obedience can be meritorious in the sight of God, it would seem that it does not differ from the gospel, which also promises eternal life freely. Yet notwithstanding this seeming agreement, there is a great difference between the law and the gospel. They differ,

1. *As to the mode of revelation peculiar to each.* The law is known naturally: the gospel was divinely revealed after the fall of man. 2. *In matter or doctrine.* The law declares the justice of God separately considered: the gospel declares it in connection with his mercy. The law teaches what we ought to be in order that we may be saved: the gospel teaches in addition to this, how we may become such as the law requires, viz: by faith in Christ. 3. *In their conditions or promises.* The law promises eternal life and all good things upon the condition of our own and perfect righteousness, and of obedience in us: the gospel promises the same blessings upon the condition that we exercise faith in Christ, by which we embrace the obedience which another, even Christ, has performed in our behalf; or the gospel teaches that we are justified freely by faith in Christ. With this faith is also connected, as by an indissoluble bond, the condition of new obedience. 4. *In their effects.* The law works wrath,

and is the ministration of death: the gospel is the ministration of life and of the Spirit. (Rom. 4: 15. 2 Cor. 3: 7.)

Question 93. How are these ten commandments divided?

Answer. Into two tables; the first of which teaches us how we must behave towards God; the second, what duties we owe to our neighbor.

EXPOSITION.

This Question concerning the division of the Decalogue is necessary and profitable; 1. Because God himself expressed a certain number of tables and commandments in the Decalogue. 2. Because Christ divided the sum of the whole law into two commandments, or into two kinds of commandments. 3. Because a correct division of the Decalogue contributes much to a proper understanding of the commandments. It teaches and admonishes us in reference to the degrees of obedience required by each table, and shows that the worship of the first table is the most important.

There is a three-fold division of the Decalogue.

I. It is divided into two tables by Moses and Christ. The first table comprehends the duties which we owe to God immediately; the second the duties which we owe to him mediately; or it may be said that the first table teaches us how we ought to behave towards God, whilst the second teaches what duties we owe towards our neighbor. This division is based upon the word of God clearly expressed, "Hew thee two tables of stone." (Ex. 34: 1, 4, 29. Deut. 4: 13.) So Christ and Paul refer the whole law to the love of God and our neighbor. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind: This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Matt. 22: 37, 38, 39.) This division is profitable; 1. That we may the better understand the true sense and design of the whole law, and the perfect obedience which it required of us. 2. That we may observe the common rule, to yield the precepts of the second table to those of the first in the same kind of worship, or that we should prefer the love and glory of God to the love and salvation of all creatures, according as it is written, "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5: 29.)

II. The Decalogue is divided into ten commandments, of which the first four belong to the first table; the rest belong to the second table. God enumerated or included ten commandments in the Decalogue, not because he was delighted more with this number than any other, but because the substance and reasons of these things were comprehended in this number; for all that we owe to God and our neighbor is contained in these ten precepts or laws, so that nothing is omitted, nor is there any thing superfluous. The four commandments of the first table comprise every thing which we owe to God immediately; whilst the remaining six, which make up the second table, contain every thing which has respect to the manner in which this life should be spent so as to result in happiness and peace.

There is, however, much diversity of sentiment and disagreement in

relation to the enumeration of the commandments. Some enumerate only three, others five, and others four commandments in the first table. But that that division which attributes four commandments to the first table, in such a way that *the first* includes what is said in reference to having no other gods beside Jehovah; *the second*, what is said of not making graven images; *the third*, of not taking the name of God in vain; *the fourth*, of hallowing the Sabbath; thus referring the other six to the second table; that this division is the best and most correct, we prove by the following considerations.

1. According to this division, each commandment expresses something distinct and separate from the rest, so that it may easily be distinguished from all the others, according to its true sense and meaning. When God himself divided the Decalogue into ten commandments, he doubtless designed that these precepts should differ from each other, so that each one should contain and express something peculiar to itself. Hence, if these commandments have not a different signification, they are not different, but one and the same. The commandments, now, which forbid our having strange gods, and making graven images, are different in their meaning and signification. The former forbids any other god to be worshipped, besides him who alone is the true God; the other forbids that this true God should be worshipped in any other way, than that which he has prescribed. So, on the other hand, the commandment concerning concupiscence, or lust, out of which some make the ninth and tenth commandments, is but one as to its meaning, as the very persons themselves who make this division, testify, whenever they, in their expositions, join together this, their ninth and tenth commandments. The apostle Paul also teaches the same thing when he speaks of lust as though it were but one commandment, saying, "I had not known lust (to be sin) except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." (Rom. 7: 7.) Hence, the first and second commandments of which we have spoken, are two different commandments; whilst this last, which some divide into two, is but one commandment. Moreover, if the tenth commandment concerning lust is to be divided into two, because it distinctly forbids coveting, or lusting after our neighbor's house and wife, then it would also follow, according to this reasoning, that it would have to be divided into more; yea, into as many commandments as there are things specified, which we are not to covet.

2. Those commandments are, without doubt, different and not the same which Moses has separated by different periods and verses; whilst those which he has expressed in one sentence, or verse, are not different, but constitute only one commandment. The Commandment, now, which forbids our having strange gods, and that which forbids our making graven images, are distinguished and separated by Moses into different verses, or sentences. They are, therefore, not the same, but different commandments. It is different, however, as it respects the commandment which forbids the coveting of our neighbor's house, and wife; for this is not separated into distinct verses by Moses, as in the former case, but is comprehended in one sentence. Hence, it constitutes only one commandment, and not two, as some will have it.

3. Moses, without doubt, observed and retained the same order in rehearsing the commandments, both in Exodus and Deuteronomy. But the words of the tenth commandment, respecting the coveting of our neighbor's

house and wife, are not in these places rehearsed in the same, but in a different order. In Exodus the words, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house*, precede those which declare, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife*. But in Deuteronomy the order is different; for here the words, *Thou shalt not desire thy neighbor's wife*, precede those which declare, *Thou shalt not desire thy neighbor's house*. Therefore, these sentences are parts of one and the same commandment, or else there will be no ninth commandment, and we will be driven to the necessity of maintaining that Moses in one place confounded the ninth commandment with the tenth, and substituted a part of the tenth in the place of the ninth, which absurdity we dare not charge upon him. This transposition of the words in the instances to which reference is here had, clearly proves that God designed that that portion of the Decalogue which is comprehended in one period, should constitute but one commandment, and that the tenth.

4. This division of the commandments of the Decalogue is supported and sustained by the best and most weighty authority. The ancient Jewish writers distinguish the first and second commandments and include in the tenth the same portion of the Decalogue, which we have, as may be seen by a reference to the Antiquities of Josephus, the third book, and to the exposition of the Decalogue by Philo. It is in the same way that the Grecian Fathers and writers divide the Decalogue; as Athanasius, Origen, Gregory Narzianzen, Chysostom, Zonaras and Nicephorus. The same thing may be said of the Latin Fathers, Jerome, Ambrose, Severus and Augustin. This distinction of the Decalogue was, therefore, at a very early period regarded as the most correct, and was received in the Greek and Latin Churches.

That Josephus, Philo and some of the Grecian Writers make each table of the Decalogue consist of five commandments, does not prove any thing against what we have here said; for although they do this, they, nevertheless, all agree that the words respecting the worship of the one true God, and those which prohibit the making of graven images, constitute two distinct commandments, whilst that portion of the Decalogue which has respect to lust, or coveting, constitutes only one commandment, and not two.

There is also another division of the Decalogue in the writings of Augustin, (Epist. 119, ad Januar. cap. 11, & quest. super Exod. cap. 7,) according to which the first table consists of only three commandments, and the second of seven; but the allegory of the Trinity upon which Augustin bases this division is too weak to give any countenance to it.

We may remark, however, in this connection, that if only the doctrine and true sense of the Decalogue concerning the true God, and his worship be retained, there ought to be no bitter, or angry contention about the division of the words, and sentences.

III. The Decalogue is divided according to its matter, or according to the things which are commanded or forbidden therein, into the worship of God *as immediate, and mediate*. The worship of God is commanded in the Decalogue *generally;* whilst that is forbidden which is contrary thereto. The worship of God, now, is either *immediate*, when moral works are performed to him immediately; or it is *mediate*, when moral works are performed towards our neighbor on God's account. The *immediate* worship of God is contained in the first table, and is either internal, or external. *The internal* consists in this, partly that we worship the true God, and that

we render unto him that which is required in the first commandment, and, partly, that we worship him in the manner prescribed in the second commandment, whether it be in respect to the worship which is internal, or external. The immediate *external worship* of God is either private, or public. That which is *private*, includes the private moral works of every one — the works which every man ought at all times to perform, as it respects acknowledging and confessing God, both in word and deed, which worship is taught in the third commandment. The *public* worship of God consists in the sanctification of the Sabbath, which is contained in the fourth commandment. The worship of God, which is *mediate*, and which consists in the duties we owe towards men, or our neighbor, is contained in the second table, and is likewise external and internal. That which is *external* consists, partly, in the duties of governors, parents, &c., to those under them, and contrariwise, which duties are comprehended in the fifth commandment; and, partly, in the duties which one man owes to another, which are taught and enforced in the other commandments. These are either the preservation of life and safety, whether of ourselves or of others, which is enjoined in the sixth commandment; or the preservation of chastity and marriage, which is taught in the seventh commandment; or the preservation of goods and possessions, which is comprised in the eighth commandment; or the preservation of truth, which is enforced in the ninth commandment. The mediate worship of God, which is *internal*, or the internal duties of that worship which is mediate, consist in the proper moderation and regulation of all the affections which we are to cherish towards our neighbor, which worship must be included in all the preceding commandments, and is prescribed in the tenth.

We may now easily return an answer to the following objection: The duties which we owe towards our neighbor are not the worship of God. The second table prescribes the duties which we owe towards our neighbor. Therefore, the obedience of the second table does not constitute the worship of God. Ans. The major proposition is true only of the immediate worship of God, in reference to which we admit the conclusion: for the obedience of the second table is not the immediate worship of God, as is the obedience of the first table; but it is that which is mediate, or which we perform towards God in our neighbor, or by our neighbor coming between God and us. For the duties of love to our neighbor ought to proceed from the love of God; and when they are performed in this way they please God, and have respect to him, no less than the obedience which is required by the first table of the Decalogue. These duties are, therefore, in respect to God, on account of whom they are performed, called and are in fact the *worship of God;* but in respect to our neighbor, towards whom they are directly performed, they are called *duties*. Hence, the worship which each table enjoins, differs as to *the object* towards whom it is performed. The first table has only an immediate object, which is God: the second has an immediate object, which is our neighbor, and at the same time a mediate object, which is God.

A table of the third division of the Decalogue.

The Decalogue commands the worship of God in general, which is,

- Immediate, or towards God alone.—This is either
  - Internal,
    - Concerning the one true God; as in commandment I.
    - Concerning the worship of God under a proper form; as in commandment II.
  - External which is either
    - Private, as in III.
    - Public, as in IV.
- Mediate, or towards our neighbor, on account of God. This is either
  - External which consists in the
    - The duties of superiors to those who are under them, and contrariwise as in V.
    - Preservation.
      - Of life and safety, whether of ourselves or of others, as in VI.
      - Of chastity, as in VII.
      - Of goods, and possessions, as in VIII.
      - Of truth, as in XI.
  - Internal, which consists in a proper moderation and regulation of the desires of the heart, that no one desire, or think any thing contrary to all or any of the former commandments, as in

GENERAL RULES.

Before we proceed to the exposition of each commandment singly, it is proper that we should lay down certain general rules necessary to the understanding of the Decalogue as a whole, and of each commandment in particular.

1. The Decalogue must be understood according to the interpretation of Scripture, or according to the explanation which the Prophets, Christ, and his Apostles have incidentally given; and not merely according to human judgment or philosophy. We must unite, or bring together the explanations found in different portions of Scripture, and not adhere slavishly to the simple letter of the commandments expressed in such a brief form. Nor is moral philosophy sufficient for a full interpretation of the Decalogue, inasmuch as it contains only a small portion of the law. This too is one great difference between philosophy and the doctrine delivered and taught in the church.

2. The Decalogue demands in every commandment internal and external obedience in the understanding, will, heart and actions of the life, perfect not only as to the parts, but also as to the degrees of this obedience; or what is the same thing, it requires that we obey God perfectly, not only in the duties enjoined, but also in the degrees of these duties; for "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." "The law is spiritual." "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment," &c. (Gal. 3: 10. Rom. 7: 14. Matt. 5: 22.)

3. The first commandment must be included in all the rest, or what is the same thing, the obedience which it requires, must be the constraining and final cause of obedience to all the other precepts of the Decalogue, or else that which we do, is not the worship of God, but hypocrisy; yea, all the duties which are enjoined in the other commandments must be performed from and on account of the love of God, or because we love him above every thing else, and desire to glorify and praise him.

4. That we may form a correct judgment, or come to a proper understanding of every commandment, it is above all things necessary that we consider the design, or end of each precept of the Decalogue; for the end of the law shows its meaning, and from the object which God intends, and wills to accomplish by each commandment, we may easily and correctly judge concerning the means which lead to the attainment of this end. This rule is also of great importance in the interpretation of human laws.

5. The same virtue, or the same work may, for different ends and in different respects, be enjoined in more than one commandment; because the end for which any thing is done gives character to the action, and the same virtue may contribute to different objects; as fortitude is a virtue of the sixth commandment and of the fifth at the same time, because it is also required of the magistrate who is to undertake the defense of others. The observance of this rule is important, therefore, that we may not give ourselves unnecessary trouble in distinguishing and comparing the different virtues.

6. Negative precepts are contained in those which are positive, or affirmative, and contrariwise: for when the law enjoins any thing, it at the same time forbids that which is contrary thereto; and when it prohibits any thing, it at the same time enjoins the opposite. In this way the law enjoins the practice of virtue, in forbidding vice, and contrariwise: for where any good is enjoined, there the evil which is particularly opposed to this good, is prohibited; for the reason that the good cannot be put into practice, without an omission of the evil at the same time. And by evil we do not mean, the doing of that which is evil, but also the omission of that which is good.

7. Care must be taken that we do not understand the commandments in too restricted a sense. Commandments which are particular must always be comprehended in the general; the general must be understood, in the particular; the cause, in the effect; and the correlative, in the relative. Thus when murder or adultery is prohibited, every injury, and every lust which men may wickedly cherish is at the same time condemned: so when the law enjoins chastity, it at the same time enforces temperance, without which there can be no chastity; and when it requires subjection, it at the same time recognises its correlative, viz: the magistracy.

8. The commandments of the second table yield to those of the first; so the commandments respecting ceremonial worship give place to those respecting moral worship. Obj. But the second commandment is like unto the first. Ans. There is here in this argument a fallacy in understanding that simply and absolutely, which is declared to be similar only in certain respects. The second is like unto the first, not in every point of view, but as we have explained in the former part of this work, 1. *In the kind of worship which it requires, which is moral*, and always to be preferred to

that which is ceremonial. Ceremonies should always give place to the duties of charity prescribed in the second table. 2. It is like unto the first *in the kind of punishment*, which is eternal, and which is inflicted upon all those who violate either table. 3. It is like unto the first in respect *to the connection which exists between the love of God and our neighbor*, as between cause and effect, by which it comes to pass that obedience cannot be rendered to one table of the Decalogue, whilst the other is disregarded. God is not loved, except our neighbor be loved; neither is our neighbor truly loved, when God is not loved. "If a man say I love God, and hateth his neighbor, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen." (1 John 4: 20.) This was also the design of Christ's discourse in Matt. 22: 38, 39; for the Pharisees placed divine ceremonies and their own superstitions upon an equality with the obedience of the second table. It was now for the correction of this error that Christ declared, that the second table is like unto the first; that is, as the obedience of the first is moral, spiritual, and most important, so also is the obedience of the second; and as the ceremonial enactments give place to the duties of the first table, so do they in like manner unto the second.

There is, however, notwithstanding these points of similarity, a very great difference between the precepts of the first and second table. They differ, 1. *In their objects.* The object of the first table is God himself; the object of the second is our neighbor. By as much, therefore, as God is greater than our neighbor, by so much the greater and more important is the obedience of the first table, than the second; and by as much as our neighbor is inferior to God, by so much does the obedience of the second table fall under that of the first. 2. They differ in respect *to order, or consequence.* The obedience of the first table is chief, and supreme: the obedience of the second falls beneath that of the first, and is depending upon it. Nay it is only because we love God, that we love our neighbor. Obedience to the first table is the cause of obedience to the second. Love to our neighbor grounds itself in love to God; but not contrariwise. So Christ says, "If any man come to me and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14: 26.) It is now on account of these two chief points of difference that the precepts of the second table may correctly be said to give place to those of the first.

But some one may still further object, and say, the duties which love to our neighbor requires, do not yield to the ceremonies commanded by the first table, according as it is said, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." (Hos. 6: 6. Matt. 12: 7.) The duties of love to our neighbor constitute the obedience of the second table. Therefore this obedience does not yield to the obedience of the first table. We may reply to this objection by denying the conclusion, inasmuch as it contains more than follows legitimately from the premises. All that follows legitimately is: Therefore the duties of the second table do not yield to the ceremonies commanded by the first; which is true, and does not contradict the rule here laid down, which is to be understood of moral and ceremonial duties. If, therefore, the necessity and safety of our neighbor require the omission of any ceremony, this should rather be omitted, than that the safety of our neighbor should be

disregarded. It is in this way that we are to understand the declaration, *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.*

Theses concerning the Decalogue.

1. The first table enjoins the duties which we owe to God; the second, the duties which we owe to our neighbor; yet in such a way that the former are referred *immediately*, the latter *mediately*, to God.

2. The first commandment, seeing that it commands us to have no other God beside the true God—the God revealed to us in the church, comprehends chiefly the internal worship of God, which has its seat in the mind, will and heart.

3. The principal parts of this worship are the true knowledge of God, faith, hope, the love of God, the fear of God, humility and patience.

4. God may be known by rational creatures in as far as he has been pleased to reveal himself to every one.

5. There is a knowledge of God which is simply and absolutely perfect, which is the knowledge that God has of himself. The eternal Father, Son and Holy Ghost, know themselves and each other, and understand wholly and perfectly their infinite essence, as well as the mode of existence peculiar to each person: for no one but a being of an infinite understanding can have a perfect knowledge of that which is infinite. There is also a knowledge of God which belongs to creatures, according to which angels and men have a knowledge of the whole and perfect nature and majesty of God, as being most simple; but they do not know it wholly, but merely in as far as God has revealed it unto them.

6. The knowledge of God which creatures possess, if it be compared with that which God has of himself, may be said to be imperfect. But if we consider the degrees of this knowledge, we may view it as perfect or imperfect, yet not absolutely, but comparatively: that is, in respect to the higher and lower degrees of this knowledge. That knowledge of God is perfect which the blessed angels and saints have in the heavenly world, by which they have a most clear perception of God, or at least as much as is necessary for the conformity of rational creatures with God. That knowledge of God is imperfect which men possess in this life.

7. The knowledge of God which is imperfect, or which we have in this life, is of two kinds: Christian or theological, and philosophical. The former is obtained from the writings of the Prophets and Apostles; the latter is known from the principles and general truths known by men naturally, and from a contemplation of the works of God.

8. The knowledge of God which is theological or Christian, consists of two kinds: the one spiritual or true, living, effectual and saving; the other is according to the letter. The former is that knowledge of God and of his will which the Holy Ghost kindles in our minds, according to and by the word, producing in the will and heart an inclination and desire more and more to know and do those things which God commands to be done. That knowledge of God which is according to the letter, is that which has been in the mind of man either from the creation, or has been kindled subsequently in the mind by the Holy Ghost, through the word, which is, however, accompanied with no desire of conformity with the requirements of the divine law.

9. The knowledge of God, which is spiritual and literal, is in one respect immediate, being produced by the influence of the Holy Ghost, without ordinary means; in another respect it is mediate, being produced by the Holy Ghost, through the doctrine which has been divinely revealed, as heard, read, or meditated upon.

10. The way by which we ordinarily obtain a knowledge of God is that which God himself has prescribed unto us, which is by study and meditation upon his word. We should, therefore, in this way strive to obtain a knowledge of God, and not require or look for any extraordinary and immediate revelation, unless God of his own accord offer it unto us, and confirm it with certain and satisfactory evidences.

11. But although God has sufficiently declared unto us, in his word, as much as he would have us know concerning himself, yet the demonstrations which nature furnishes respecting God are not superfluous, seeing that they reprove the wickedness of ungodly men, whilst they establish the faithful in piety and godliness, and are, therefore, commended by God himself in various places in the Scriptures, and are to be considered by us.

12. Yet we must hold, respecting these demonstrations which nature furnishes of God, that they are indeed true and in harmony with his word; but that they are, nevertheless, not sufficient to a true knowledge of God.

13. Furthermore, although natural demonstrations teach nothing concerning God that is false, yet men, without the knowledge of God's word, obtain nothing from them except false notions and conceptions of God; both because these demonstrations do not contain as much as is delivered in his word, and also because even those things which may be understood naturally, men, nevertheless, on account of innate corruption and blindness, receive and interpret falsely, and so corrupt it in various ways.

14. Ignorance of those things which God will have known by us concerning himself, revealed to the church in his word and works both of creation and redemption, is, therefore, here condemned in the first commandment of the Decalogue. So, likewise, there is here a condemnation of the errors of those who imagine that there is no God, as the Epicureans, or that there are many gods, as do the heathen, the Manichæans, and those who offer prayers to the angels, the spirits of the departed, or other creatures. The same thing may be said of the vain confidence of superstitious men, who put their trust in creatures and in things different from God, who has revealed himself in the church, as do the Jews, Mahometans, Sabellians, Samosatenians, Arians, and such like, who do not acknowledge God to be the eternal Father, with the Son and Holy Ghost co-eternal.

Having now laid down certain general rules necessary for a proper understanding of the Decalogue, we shall now proceed to give the true sense of each commandment in particular.

Question 94. What doth God enjoin in the first command?

Answer. That I, as sincerely as I desire the salvation of my own soul, avoid and flee from all idolatry, sorcery, soothsaying, superstition, invocation of saints, or any other creature, and learn rightly to know the only true God, trust in him alone, with humility and patience submit to him, expect all good things from him only; love, fear, and glorify him with my whole heart: so that I renounce and forsake all creatures, rather than commit even the least thing contrary to his will.

EXPOSITION.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT consists of two parts: a preface and a precept. The words of the preface are: *I am the Lord thy God, which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.* This preface belongs to the whole Decalogue. It describes and distinguishes God, the law-giver from all creatures, human legislators and false deities, and contains three reasons why the obedience of the first and following commandments should be performed to God. *The first* is, because God declares himself to be Jehovah, by which he distinguishes himself, the true God, from all creatures, that he may show that he has the supreme right and authority to rule. I, said he, whom thou hearest speaking, and announcing the law unto thee, *I am Jehovah*, the true God, who exists of and by himself, giving life and being to all things, and having, therefore, supreme authority to govern and rule all things—the Creator of all things, being eternal and almighty—the author and preserver of all good things: Therefore thou shalt obey me. 2. He says *that he is the God of his people*, that he might thus, by the promise of his bountifulness, constrain us the more effectually to render obedience to him. God is, indeed, the God of all creatures by creation, preservation and government; but he is the God of his church by the special manifestation and communication which he has made of himself: for he is properly the God of those whom he loves, and delights in above all others. It is for this reason that David calls that nation happy whose God is the Lord, saying, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Ps. 33: 12.) God is *now our God*, when we acknowledge him to be such an one as he has revealed himself in his word, viz: as one who directs and devotes his power, justice, wisdom and mercy to our salvation, and who offers, with singular love, to be gracious to us in his Son. 3. He adds, *which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt*, that he might, by bringing them to recollect the recent and wonderful deliverance wrought in their behalf, show and admonish them that they were bound to render gratitude and obedience to him. It is as if he would say, *I am he* who is thy God; I have manifested myself to thee, and drawn thee to myself by such singular benefits. This has respect to us, as well as to the Jews; because by the mention of this one deliverance, so wonderful in its nature, there is figuratively comprehended all the deliverances of the church, and amongst them that which has been accomplished by Christ, of which the deliverance from Egyptian bondage was a type. Hence, when God in this preface declares that he is Jehovah, the deliverer of the church, he opposes himself to all creatures and idols, and challenges for himself universal obedience, honor and worship.

There have been some who have considered this preface as the first commandment, and have taken the words, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*, as the second commandment. But it is plain that the words, *I am the Lord thy God*, &c., are not the words of one commanding anything, but of one affirming something with reference to himself. As to the words, however, which follow, saying, Thou shalt have, &c., they evidently have the form of a commandment.

The first commandment, then, is, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* The end of this commandment is the immediate internal worship of

God; which is, that we acknowledge the only true God revealed in the church, and render unto him, with all our heart, soul and mind, such honor as is due him. This commandment, moreover, is negative in such a way, that it contains in it an affirmative: *Thou shalt have no other gods; but thou shalt regard me, that Jehovah revealed in the church, as thy God alone. To have God*, is to know and acknowledge that he is God, that he is one, that he is such an one as he has revealed himself in the church, and that he is also such a God to us: then it is to trust in him alone, with the greatest humility and patience — to submit ourselves to him with fear and reverence — to love him and to expect all good things from him alone. It is in these things that the obedience of this commandment consists, whose parts are the virtues of which we shall presently speak. *Another god* is any and every thing to which we may attribute the properties, attributes and works of the true God, even though the thing itself does not possess them, and even though they are inconsistent with its nature. *To have other gods* is not to have the true God; which is, to have no god, or many gods, or another god, beside him that has been revealed unto us, or not to acknowledge God to be unto us such as he has made himself known to be, or not to trust in him — not to submit ourselves to him in true humility and patience — not to expect all good things from him alone, and not to love or revere him. The different parts of this impiety constitute those vices which are the opposite of the virtues of which we shall speak in the exposition of this commandment. *Before me, or in my sight*, as if he would say: Thou shalt have no other gods, not only in thy words and actions in the sight of men; but thou shalt have none beside me in the secret chamber of thy heart, for nothing is concealed from my view; — I am the searcher of hearts, and the trier of the reins of the children of men, and all things are naked and open to my view.

The easiest method of explaining each commandment, is to make a division of the obedience which every precept requires, into the virtues that are peculiar to it as parts, and then take up and consider the vices which are opposed to these virtues. According to this method, the parts of the obedience required by the first commandment consist of seven in number: the knowledge of God, faith, hope, the love of God, the fear of God, humility, and patience.

I. The knowledge of God includes such a conception of the being and character of God as agrees with the revelation he has been pleased to make of himself in his works and word, and to be moved and stirred by this knowledge to trust, love, fear, and worship this one true God, concerning which it is said: "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard." "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (Rom. 10: 14. John 17: 3.)

The vices opposed to this virtue are many, of which we may mention the following: 1. *Ignorance of God and of his will*, which is not to know concerning God, or to doubt in reference to those things which we ought to know from the works of creation, and the divine revelation which has been made unto us. This ignorance is either *innate*, by which we mean an ignorance of those things of which we have no knowledge, and which we cannot understand on account of the depravity of our nature; or it is a *feigned and studied ignorance* of those things which our conscience tells

us should be inquired into, but which we, nevertheless, do not seek to become acquainted with from any desire of knowing or obeying God. It is said of both forms of this ignorance of God: "There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." (Rom. 3: 11. 1 Cor. 2: 14.)

2. Errors or false notions of God, as when some imagine that there is no God, or that there are many gods, as do heathen nations and the Manichæans; or if they do not profess this in word, they, nevertheless, in fact, make many gods, by ascribing to creature those properties which are peculiar to God alone, as the Papists do, who make angels and the spirits of men which have departed this life gods; inasmuch as to address any one in prayer, is to attribute infinite wisdom and power to the person thus invoked. Hence Paul declares, that those who pray to creatures, "Change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." "They also change the truth of God into a lie; whilst they worship and serve the creature more than the Creator." (Rom. 1: 23, 25.) The angel of the Lord forbade John to worship him, assigning this reason: "I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God," &c. (Rev. 19: 10.) Those in like manner entertain incorrect ideas of God, and wander from him, who acknowledge one god, but not the true God, who has made a revelation of himself in the gospel; as the wiser philosophers, the Mahommetans, &c. The same thing may be said of those who profess that they know the true God; but yet depart from him, and worship instead of him, an idol which they make for themselves; because they imagine the true God, other than he has made himself known in his word; as do the Jews, the Samosatenians, the Arians, &c. "He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father." "Whosoever denieth the Son the same hath not the Father." (John 5: 23. 1 John 2: 23.)

3. *Magic, sorcery and soothsaying.* Every thing of this kind is in direct opposition to a proper knowledge of God; for it consists in a covenant or agreement entered into with the devil, the enemy of God, accompanied with certain words or ceremonies, by the repeating or doing of which, they shall receive things promised of the devil, and these such as should be sought and received from God alone; as that by the help and assistance of the devil, they shall know and accomplish things not necessary, with a view either to gratify their wicked lusts, or to make a display, or for the purpose of obtaining the commodities of life. *Magus* is a Persian word, signifying a philosopher or teacher. Men feeling their own ignorance called in the assistance of Satan. It was by this means that the term came into reproach, so that magic, which we call *zaubern*, began to be used in the place of it.

Enchantments belong to magic, and consists in the use of certain words and ceremonies according to an agreement entered into with the devil, according to which he affects what the enchanters ask at his hands, when the words and signs have been gone through with. There is no efficacy or power in the words and ceremonies which are used; but the devil himself accomplishes what he has promised, with the design, that these persons may fall from God to himself, and that they may worship him instead of God. The Scriptures now do not only condemn magicians and enchanters

themselves, but all those who countenance them by seeking their direction and assistance; for God includes both in his law when he says: "The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, I will set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people. "There shall not be found among you a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer; for all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord," &c. (Lev. 20: 6. Deut. 18: 11, 12.)

4. *Superstition.* This is to attribute effects to certain things, or to particular signs and words, which do not depend upon any physical or po litical causes, nor upon the word of God, and which would not take place were it not for the devil and other causes, besides those which are supposed. And although it may not include any covenant with the devil, yet it is, nevertheless, idolatry. There is included in this vice *soothsaying, special attention to, and interpretation of dreams, divinations, with the signs and predictions of diviners and wizards*, all of which the Scriptures condemn in the most express terms.

5. *All confidence reposed in creatures*, which is evidently opposed to a correct knowledge of God, since he who places his trust in creatures makes for himself many gods. Hence God expressly condemns in his word all those who repose their confidence either in men, or in power and riches, or in any created object. *Avarice*, or covetousness, is included in this vice, and condemned.

6. *Idolatry*, which is defined in the 95th Question of the Catechism. There are two forms or species of idolatry. *One* is, when another beside the true God is professedly worshiped, or, when that is worshiped for God which is no God. The first is the more apparent and gross form of idolatry, and belongs properly to this first commandment. *The other* form of idolatry is when we do not professedly worship another God, but err in the kind of worship we render unto him, or when the true God is worshiped in a manner different from that which he has prescribed in the second commandment, and in various other portions of his word. This species of idolatry is more subtle and refined, and is condemned in the second commandment. Those who worship God in statues and images, are idolators, notwithstanding they deny that they worship any other being beside the true God; for they imagine God to be such an one as will be worshiped in images, and so change the will of God, which being done, God himself no longer remains the same.

7. *Contempt of God*, which is to have a correct knowledge of God without being moved and excited thereby to love and worship him; or it is to have a knowledge of the true God revealed in the church, and yet not be led by it to love, worship, fear and confide in him. The knowledge of the true God is not of itself sufficient; it must also be accompanied with suitable affections or else the devils and the Gentiles would likewise have a true knowledge of God, which the Apostle denies, when he says, "They are without excuse; because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful," &c. (Rom. 1: 20, 21.)

II. Faith, is a firm persuasion, by which we assent to every thing which God has revealed to us in his word, and by which we rest fully assured that the promise of the free mercy of God extends to us for Christ's sake; and is also an assured confidence by which we receive this benefit of God, and rest upon it—which confidence the Holy Ghost works by the gospel

in the minds and hearts of the elect, producing in them delight in God, prayer and obedience according to all the commandments of God. "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established." (2 Chron. 20 : 20.)

There is opposed to faith on the side of want, I. *Unbelief*, which includes a rejection of what is heard and known respecting God. 2. *Doubt*, which is neither firmly to assent to the doctrine concerning God, nor yet wholly to reject it; but consists in wavering, and vacillating so as now to incline a little this way, and then a little that way. 3. *Diffidence, or distrust.* This does not apply to itself the knowledge which it has of God and his promises, but through fear of being forsaken of God flies from duty, and seeks protection out of God. It is said in reference to all these things: "He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." (John 5 : 10.) 4. *Hypocritical and temporary faith.* This includes an assent to the doctrine of the church, and a temporary joy resulting from a knowledge of this doctrine; but it does not apply to itself with full confidence the divine promise, and is also without regeneration, on account of which it is soon overcome by the force of temptation and other causes, and so casts away again the profession of piety which is made. "He that received the seed into strong places, the same he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation, or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." "Which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away." "Then Simon himself believed also," &c. (Matt. 13 : 20. Luke 8 : 13. Acts 8 : 13.)

Those things, on the other hand, which are opposed to faith on the side of excess, include, 1. *Tempting God*, which consists in departing from the word and order of God, and so to presume upon, or to make a trial of his truth and power, and to provoke him to anger, proudly and presumptuously by unbelief, or distrust, or contempt of God, and by a vain confidence and conceit of our own wisdom, righteousness, power and glory. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God." "Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than He?" (Matt. 4 : 7. 1 Cor. 10 : 9, 22.) 2. *Carnal security*, which is to live without any thought of God and his will, or of our own infirmity and danger, without acknowledging and deploring our sinfulness and without the fear of God, and yet to expect and hope at the same time for deliverance from punishment and the wrath of God. This state of carnal security is often spoken of and condemned in the holy Scriptures, as when it is said, "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark; and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24 : 37–40.)

III. Hope.— This is a sure and certain expectation of eternal life, to be given freely for the sake of Christ, with the expectation of a mitigation of present evils with a deliverance from them, according to the counsel and will of God. Concerning this it is said: "Be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." "Hope maketh not ashamed." (1 Pet. 1 : 13. Rom. 5 : 5.)

Hope springs from faith, because he who has the assurance that he now

enjoys the good will of God, may be certain of it also in time to come, inasmuch as God is unchangeable. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." (Rom. 11: 29.) These two graces, however, are not the same. *Faith* embraces the present benefits of God, and his will towards us; whilst *hope* includes and has respect to the fruits of the present and unchangeable good will of God, which are still future. Hence it is said, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" (Heb. 11: 1. Rom. 8: 24.)

That which is opposed to hope, as it respects the want thereof, is, 1. *Despair*, which is to regard one's sins as being greater than the merits of the Son of God, and therefore not to accept of the mercy of God offered in his Son, our mediator, and so not to look for the benefits promised to the faithful; but to be tormented by a sense of the dreadful wrath of God, and by the fear of being cast into everlasting punishment, and so to dread the mention of the name of God and to hate him, as cruel and tyrannical. It was under a sense of despair that Cain exclaimed, My sin is greater than can be pardoned. (Gen. 4: 13.) Paul also exhorts in view of this, "Not to sorrow as those who have no hope." Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. (1 Thes. 4: 13. Rom. 5: 20.)

2. *Doubt in reference to future benefits*, such as eternal life, defence and deliverance from temptations, and final perseverance, which are all promised in the word of God.

As it regards the opposite side of hope, or that which is opposed thereto by reason of excess, we may mention of *carnal security*, of which we have just given a definition. And as carnal security is everywhere condemned in the word of God, so *spiritual security* is everywhere commended and required in all the godly. This spiritual security assures us of the grace of God against all the reproofs and accusations of conscience, and is nothing else than faith and hope joined with true repentance, which does not fear being deserted and rejected of God, because it is fully persuaded that his will and favor are unchangeable. Hence it is said in reference to this, "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8: 31, 32.)

IV. The love of God consists in acknowledging him to be good and merciful in the highest degree, and that not only in himself, but also towards us, and therefore to love him supremely — to desire more earnestly to be united and conformed to him, and to have his will accomplished in us, than to enjoy all things beside, and to be willing to suffer the loss of all things, which we have, sooner than be deprived of his favor. Or, it is, from a knowledge of the infinite goodness of God, so to love him, that we would rather suffer the loss of all things, than to be deprived of communion with him, or offend him in any thing. True love comprehends two things. *First*, a desire of the safety and preservation of that which we love; and, *secondly*, a desire to be united with the object of our love, or to have it united to us. In reference to this it is said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters; yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." (Deut. 6: 5. Luke 14: 26.)

There is opposed to the love of God, on the side of want, 1. A rejection of the love of God, or a contempt and hatred to God, which is to flee from God, who accuses and punishes the wicked for their sins, and to indulge enmity towards him, arising from the aversion which our nature has to God and his justice, and the propensity which it has to sin. It is said of this sin: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom. 7: 7.) 2. *An inordinate love of self, and of other creatures*, which is to prefer our own lusts, pleasures, life, honor and other things to God, and his will and glory, and to disregard and offend him rather than to suffer the loss of those things which we love. "Whosoever loveth father, or mother, more than me, is not worthy of me." (Matt. 10: 37.) 3. *A feigned, hypocritical love of God.* In regard to this virtue there can be no excess, for the reason that we never love God as strongly as we ought.

V. THE FEAR OF GOD is to acknowledge his infinite wrath against sin, his power to punish it, and to regard an offence against God, accompanied with aversion to him, the greatest evil, and for this reason to hate and detest sin; and to be willing to suffer all other things sooner than offend God in the smallest matter. Or it is an unwillingness to offend God, resulting from submission to God and a knowledge of his wisdom, power, justice, and the right which he has over all creatures. "Thou shalt fear thy God; I am the Lord." "Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain; forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nation and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee." (Lev. 19: 14. Jer. 10: 7.)

Obj. The highest good cannot be feared, because fear includes the shunning of evil. God is the highest good. Therefore, he cannot be feared. Ans. The highest good cannot be feared in as far as it is such; but in this respect, as it is also something else. So God is feared, not as he is the highest good, for in this respect he is loved; but as he is just, and able to punish; or he is feared in respect to the evil and punishment of destruction which he is able to inflict.

The love and fear of God differ from each other in the following respects: 1. *Love* follows the good, even God, and desires to be united to him. *Fear* turns away from the evil, even the displeasure and wrath of God, and dreads a separation from him. Or we may express it thus: Love is unwilling to be deprived of the highest good; whilst fear dreads to offend the highest good. 2. Love arises from a knowledge of the goodness of God; fear from a knowledge of the power and justice of God, and from the right which he has over all creatures.

The fear of God which man had before the fall was different from that which is now in the regenerate in this life. The fear of God as it was in man in his state of original holiness, or as it now is, and will be in the blessed angels and man in eternal life, is a strong averson to sin and to the punishment of sin, which, however, is without grief or pain; because they neither have sin in them, nor experience the punishment of it; and have the assurance that they never will sin, or be punished of God. "He will swallow up death in victory; the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces." (Is. 25: 8.) The fear of God which is in the regenerate in this life is an acknowledgment of sin and the wrath of God, and a sincere sorrow arising from a view of the sins we have committed, from the offence we

have offered God by our sins, and from the miseries we and others endure in consequence of sin, accompanied with a fear of future sins and punishment, and an ardent desire to escape these evils, by reason of the knowledge of the mercy of God made known to us in Christ. It is said in reference to this fear: "Dost not thou fear God?" "Fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Luke 23: 40. Matt. 10: 28.) This fear is usually called *filial fear*, because it is such as children cherish towards their parents, who are sorry on account of a father's anger and displeasure, and fear lest they should again offend him and be punished; and are, nevertheless, continually assured of the love, and good will of the father towards them. Hence they love him, and are more deeply grieved on account of the love which they cherish towards him, whom they have offended. Thus it is said of Peter, that "he went out and wept bitterly." (Matt. 26: 75.)

Servile fear, such as the slave has for his master, which consists in fleeing punishment without faith and without a desire and purpose of changing the life, being accompanied with despair, flight and separation from God—such a servile fear differs greatly from that which is filial. 1. *Filial fear* arises from confidence and love to God; that which is *servile* arises from a knowledge and conviction of sin, and from a sense of the judgment and displeasure of God. 2. *Filial fear* does not turn away from God, but hates sin above every thing else, and fears to offend God: *servile fear* is a flight and hatred, not of sin, but of punishment and of the divine judgment, and so of God himself. 3. *Filial fear* is connected with the certainty of salvation and of eternal life: *servile fear* is a fear and expectation of eternal condemnation and rejection of God, and is great in proportion to the doubt and despair which it entertains of the grace and mercy of God. This is the fear of devils and wicked men, and is the commencement of eternal death, which the ungodly experience already in this life. "I heard thy voice in the garden and I was afraid." "The devils believe and tremble." (Gen. 3: 10. James 2: 19.)

We must here observe that the love and fear of God are frequently taken in the Scriptures for the whole worship of God, or for universal obedience to all the commandments of God. "By this we know that we love the children of God when we love God, and keep his commandments." "Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." (1 John 5: 2. 1 Tim. 1: 5. Prov. 1: 7.) The reason of this arises from the fact, that the love and fear of God constitute the cause of our entire obedience, inasmuch as they spring from faith and hope; for those who truly love and fear God will not willingly offend him in any thing, but will endeavor to do whatever will be pleasing to him.

There is opposed to the fear of God on the side of *want*, profanity, carnal security and contempt of God. And on the side of *excess* servile fear and despair, of which we have already spoken.

VI. Humility is to acknowledge that all the good which is in us, and done by us does not proceed from any worthiness or excellency which we possess, but from the free goodness of God, and so by an acknowledgment of the divine majesty, and our own weakness and unworthiness, to submit ourselves to God, to ascribe the glory of all the good which is in us to him alone, and so to fear God, to acknowledge and deplore our imperfections

and faults, and not to desire any higher position for ourselves, than that which God has assigned to us, nor to be dissatisfied with our gifts, but by the help of God to remain contented and satisfied with our calling and position in life, and not to despise others who are placed in more desirable situations than ourselves, nor to hinder them in the discharge of their duty, but to acknowledge that others are, and may also become profitable instruments of God; and therefore to attribute and yield to them willingly the place and honor due them, and not to attribute to ourselves, or attempt that which it is not in our power to accomplish, nor claim for ourselves a higher degree of excellence than others possess, but to be contented with the gifts and position which God has assigned us, and so to devote all our gifts and endeavors to the glory of God and the salvation of our fellow men, even of those who are of the lower and more unworthy class, and not to murmur against God, if our hopes are disappointed, or we are despised, but in all things to attribute to God the praise of wisdom and righteousness. "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it." "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." "Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." (1 Cor. 4: 7. 1 Pet. 5: 5. Matt. 18: 4. Phil. 2: 3.)

The opposite of humility, as it respects the want of this virtue, *is pride, or arrogance.* Pride consists in attributing the gifts which we possess, not to God, but to our own worthiness, and natural powers, and so includes an admiration of self and of our gifts. He who is possessed of pride does not fear God, neither does he acknowledge or deplore his imperfections — he is continually aspiring after a more elevated position and calling in life, and attributes to himself not in the strength of God, but in that of his own powers, what he does not possess — attempts things beyond his strength, and foreign to his calling — despises those who are above him in life, yields to none, but desires to go before and excel others, and directs his gifts and counsels to his own praise and glory — is displeased with God and man, and frets and speaks against God when his desires and projects are not realised, and even accuses God of error and injustice when the divine arrangements do not fall in with the opinions and wishes of men. *Or to express it more briefly*, we may say, that pride consists in an admiration of self and of one's own gifts and attainments, attributing these gifts to itself, attempting things that do not properly fall within its sphere, and fretting against God, when disappointed in the gratification of its own wishes and desires. Of this vice it is said: "God resisteth the proud." "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord." (1 Pet. 5: 5. Prov. 16: 5.)

A feigned modesty or humility is the opposite of this virtue as it respects the other extreme. This affected modesty consists in courting the praise of humility by denying those things which any one in his own mind attributes to himself, whether he really possess them or not, and by refusing those things which he desires and endeavors to obtain secretly. "Moreover, when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily

I say unto you, They have their reward." (Matt. 6: 16.) Aristotle terms it *affected niceness*, as though he would call it a *feigned fastidiousness*. Some translate the words used by Aristotle, *vain glorious dissemblers*. The words of Aristotle (Ethic. lib. 4. cap. 7.) may be rendered thus: "*Those who dissemble in things that are small and manifest, are called skilful dissemblers, and are generally despised; and sometimes it consists in pride, as the wearing of a Lacedemonian attire.*" This counterfeit humility is, therefore, a pride that is two-fold.

VII. PATIENCE consists in obeying God and submitting to him under the various evils and adversities which he sends upon us, and desires us to endure, arising from a knowledge of the wisdom, providence, justness and goodness of God — does not murmur against God on account of the sufferings to which these evils expose us, and does nothing contrary to his commands; but in the midst of our sufferings retains confidence and hope in God that he will afford us his grace and help — seeks deliverance from God, and by this knowledge and confidence mitigates the griefs and sufferings to which we are exposed. *Or, we may define it more briefly thus:* Patience is to obey God in submissively enduring the various evils which he sends upon us, from a knowledge of the divine majesty, and from an assurance of God's assistance and deliverance, according as it is said: "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." "Wait on the Lord and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee." (Ps. 37: 7, 34.)

Humility and patience belong to the first commandment, not only because they are parts of that internal obedience which God requires us to render immediately to him, but also because they follow, or grow out of the true knowledge, confidence, love and fear of God, as necessary effects.

The opposite of patience, on the side of want is *impatience*, which is an unwillingness, arising from an ignorance and distrust of the divine wisdom, providence, justice and goodness, to obey God by enduring the evils and adversities which he requires us to suffer, and to speak against God on account of the suffering to which we are subject, or to violate his commands, and not to seek or expect help and deliverance from God, and so not to assuage or moderate our grief by the knowledge and assurance which we have of the divine will, but to indulge in it, and being broken thereby to be driven to despair. Saul and Judas are examples of this impatience; Job, also, gave evidence of it in the complaints which he uttered in his distress, which may, also, be true of the godly in their sufferings.

Thoughtlessness or rashness is the opposite of patience on the side of excess, and consists in rushing unnecessarily into danger, from imprudence, ignorance or inconsiderateness as it respects the danger, or our own calling and the will of God, or from a vain and presumptuous confidence. He who loves danger will perish in it.

We may here remark, that often in this and other commandments the same vices are opposed to many and different virtues. So in this commandment carnal security stands opposed to faith, hope and the fear of God; tempting God is opposed to hope, the love of God, humility and patience; whilst idolatry is utterly at variance with a true knowledge of God and faith. The same thing may be seen, and should be observed in the virtues and vices of other commandments.

THIRTY-FIFTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 96. What does God require in the second command?

Answer. That we in nowise represent God by images, nor worship him in any other way than he has commanded in his word.

EXPOSITION.

Two things are comprehended in this commandment: the commandment itself, and an exhortation to obedience. *The end, or design of this commandment* is, that the true God, who in the first precept commanded that he alone should be worshipped, be worshipped under a proper form, or with such worship as it is right and proper that intelligent creatures should pay unto him — such as is pleasing to him, and not with such worship as that which is according to the imagination and device of man: Or, we may say that the design of this commandment is, that the worship of God as prescribed be preserved pure and uncorrupted, and not be violated by any form of superstitious worship. The true worship of God is, therefore, here enjoyed, and a rule at the same time given, that we sacredly and conscientiously keep ourselves within the bounds which God has prescribed, and that we do not add anything to that worship which has been divinely instituted, or corrupt it in any part, even the most unimportant; which the Scriptures also expressly enjoin in many other places. The *true worship* of God now consists in every internal or external work commanded by God, done in faith, which rests fully assured that both the person and work please God, for the mediator's sake, and with the design that we may glorify God thereby. *To worship God truly*, is to worship him in the manner which he himself has prescribed in his word.

This commandment forbids, on the other hand, every form of will-worship, or such as is false, requiring that we neither regard or worship images and creatures for God, nor represent the true God by any image or figure, nor worship him at or by images, or with any other kind of worship which he himself has not prescribed. For when God condemns the principal, the grossest and most palpable form of false worship, which is that of worshipping him at or by images, it is plainly manifest that he also condemns at the same time all other forms of false worship, inasmuch as they all grow out of this. He forbids this most shocking kind of idolatry, not that he would overlook or exclude other forms of worship opposed to that which he has prescribed; but because this is the root, the foundation of all the rest. Hence all kinds of worship not instituted by God, but by men, as well as those which contain the same reason why they should be prohibited, are forbidden in this precept of the Decalogue.

All those things, therefore, which are opposed to the true worship of God are contrary to this second commandment; such as

1. *Idolatry*, which consists in a false or superstitious worship of God. There are, as we have already remarked, two principal kinds of idolatry. *The one* is more gross and palpable, as when worship is paid to a false God, which is the case, when, instead of or beside the true God, such worship as that which is due to him alone, is given to some thing or object, whether imaginary or real. This form of idolatry is particularly forbidden in the

first commandment, and also partly in the third. *The other species of idolatry* is more subtle and refined, as when the true God is supposed to be worshipped, whilst the kind of worship which is paid unto him is false, which is the case when any one imagines that he is worshipping or honoring God by the performance of any work not prescribed by the divine law. This species of idolatry is more properly condemned in the second commandment, and is termed superstition, because it adds to the commandments of God the inventions of men. Those are called *superstitious* who corrupt the worship of God by their own inventions. This will-worship or superstition is condemned in every part of the word of God. "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, &c., which all are to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of men; which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh." (Matt. 15: 8, 9. Col. 2: 16, 22, 23.)

We may now easily return an answer to the following objection: Idolatry is forbidden in the first commandment. In the second also. Therefore, they constitute only one commandment. Ans. The first commandment forbids one form of idolatry, as when another God is worshipped; the second forbids another species of idolatry, as when the true God is worshipped differently from what he ought to be. Reply. But still there is always idolatry, and another God worshipped. Ans. There is, indeed, always an idol; but not always in the intention and profession of men. Hence, those who sin against the second commandment, sin also against the first; because, those who worship God otherwise than he will be worshipped, imagine another God, one differently affected from what the true God is; and in this way they do not worship God, but a figment of their own brain, which they persuade themselves is affected in this manner.

2. *Hypocrisy*, which consists in putting on the appearance of true piety, and the worship of God, doing such external works as God has commanded, whether moral or ceremonial, without true faith and conversion, or inward obedience. The prophet Isaiah describes and condemns this sin in these words: "Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their hearts far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men, therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people," &c. (Is. 29: 13, 14.)

3. *Profanity*. This includes a voluntary renunciation and contempt of all religion, and of the worship of God both internal and external, or of some portions of it, and is, therefore, not only in opposition to this commandment, but to the whole worship of God as prescribed in the first and second tables.

There are some who object to what we have here said, and affirm in support of will-worship, that those passages which we have cited as condemning it, speak only in reference to the ceremonies instituted by Moses, and of the unlawful commandments of men, such as constitute no part of

the worship of God; and not of those precepts which have been sanctioned by the church and bishops, and which command nothing contrary to the word of God. But that this argument is false, may be proven by certain declarations connected with those passages of Scripture to which we have referred, which likewise reject those human laws, which, upon their own authority, prescribe anything in reference to divine worship which God has not commanded, although the thing itself is neither sinful nor forbidden by God. So Christ rejects the tradition which the Jews had in regard to washing their hands, because they associated with it the idea of divine worship, although it was not sinful in itself, saying, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within ye are full of extortion and excess." (Matt. 15: 11; 23, 25.) The same thing may be said of celibacy and of the distinction of meats and days, of which the apostle Paul speaks, (Rom. 14: 6. 1 Tim. 4: 1–3,) and which he calls "doctrines of devils," although in themselves they are lawful to the godly, as he in other places teaches. Wherefore, those things also which are in themselves indifferent, that is neither commanded nor prohibited by God, if they are prescribed and done as the worship of God, or if it is supposed that God is honored by our performing them, and dishonored by neglecting them, it is plainly manifest that the Scriptures in these and similar places condemn them.

Such works, therefore, as are indifferent, must be carefully distinguished from those in which we worship God: 1. Because to imagine a different worship of God from that which he has prescribed, is to imagine another will of God, and so another God. And those who do this, as Aaron and Jeroboam formerly did, are no less guilty of idolatry, than those who professedly worship another god, beside that Jehovah revealed in the church. 2. Because, by such a mingling of the true worship of God with that which is false, the true God is confounded with idols, which are honored in the forms of worship invented by men. 3. Because whatsoever is not of faith is sin. (Rom. 14: 23.) But he who does any thing in order that he may worship God by it, his conscience not knowing or doubting, whether God will be worshipped in this way, or not, does it not of faith; because he is ignorant whether his work pleases, or displeases God, and so does not regard him, inasmuch as he presumes to do it, notwithstanding it is displeasing to him.

But since those who defend the forms of worship invented by men, also bring forward various declarations in which the Scriptures require us to yield obedience to the commandments of men, and maintain that they have the same force and authority which divine precepts have, and so have the nature of divine worship; it is, therefore, necessary that we should here say something in reference to human precepts and their differences.

Concerning human precepts and the authority of ecclesiastical traditions.

There are four classes of things concerning which men give commandment. These are, *first*, *divine precepts*, which God desires, that men should propose unto themselves for their observance, not, however, in their

own name, but by the authority of God himself, as being the ministers and messengers, and not the authors of these precepts. It is in this way that the ministers of the gospel declare the doctrine revealed from heaven to the church, parents to their children, teachers to their pupils, and that magistrates make known to their subjects the precepts of the Decalogue. Obedience to these commandments is, and is called the *worship of God*, because they are not human, but divine precepts, to which it is necessary to yield obedience, even though the authority or command of no creature accede thereto; yea, even if all creatures should enjoin the contrary. The Scriptures speak of these commandments in the following places: "My son keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother." "The man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall." "If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man, and a publican." (Prov. 6: 20. Deut. 17: 12. Matt. 18: 17. See, also, Luke 10: 17. Thes. 4: 2, 8. Ex. 16: 8. Matt. 23: 2, 3. Heb. 13: 17. 1 Cor. 4: 21: 2 Co. 13: 10. 2 Thes. 3: 14.) All these declarations teach that we ought to yield obedience to men, as the ministers of God, in those things which properly belong to the ministry; but they do not grant the power to a any one to institute new forms of divine worship at their own pleasure, according as it is written: "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." "As I besought thee that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine." (Prov. 30: 6. 1 Tim. 1: 3. See, also, 1 Tim. 6: 2—5; 4: 11. 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.)

Secondly, there are civil ordinances prescribed by men, which include the arrangement, or fixing of those circumstances which are necessary and useful for securing the observance of the moral precepts of the second table. Such are the positive laws of magistrates, parents, teachers, masters, and all those who are placed in positions of authority. Obedience is *the worship of God* in as far as it has respect to the general, which is moral and commanded by God, and includes obedience to the magistrate and others in authority; but not in as far as it pertains to that which is special in regard to the action, or to the circumstances connected with it—in this respect it is not the worship of God, because only those works constitute divine worship, which it is necessary to do on account of the commandment of God, even though no creature had given any precept respecting them; but these, were it not that the magistrate commands them, might be done or omitted without any offence to God. But yet these civil ordinances prescribed by magistrates and others, bind the conscience; that is, they must necessarily be complied with, and cannot be disregarded without offence to God, even though it might be done without being connected with any public scandal, if we would keep our obedience pure, and unsullied. So to bear, or not to bear arms, is not the worship of God; but when the magistrate commands, or prohibits it, the obedience which is then rendered constitutes divine worship: and he who acts contrary to this command, or prohibition, sins against God, even though he might so conceal it, as to offend no man; because the general, viz. obedience to the magistrate, which is the worship of God, is then violated. Yet these actions do not in themselves, constitute the worship of God; it is only by accident, on account of the command of the magistrate. If this were not to intervene, obedience would not be violated.

The following passages of Scripture are here in point; "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." "Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." "Wherefore ye must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities, and powers, to obey magistrates, &c." (Rom. 13: 1, 3, 5. Tit. 3: 1. Also Eph. 6: 1. Col. 3: 22, 23.)

Thirdly, there are ecclesiastical or ceremonial ordinances, prescribed by men, which include the determinations of circumstances necessary or useful for the maintenance of the moral precepts of the first table; of which kind are the time, the place, the form and order of sermons, prayers, reading in the church, fasts, the manner of proceeding in the election of ministers, in collecting and distributing alms, and things of a similar nature, concerning which God has given no particular command. That which is general in regard to these laws is moral, as in the case of civil enactments, if they are only correctly and profitably made, and is, therefore, the *worship of God*. But, as to the ceremonies themselves which are here prescribed, they neither constitute the worship of God, nor bind men's consciences, nor is the observance of them necessary, except when a neglect of them would be the occasion of offence. So it is not the worship of God, but a thing indifferent, and not binding upon men's consciences, to use this, or that form of prayer, to pray at this, or at that time, at this, or at that hour, in this, or in that place, standing or kneeling, to read and explain this or that text of Scripture in the church, to eat or not to eat flesh, &c. Nor does this power and authority to establish, abolish, or change these ordinances, belong merely to the church, as she may think it best for her edification; but the consciences of particular individuals also retain this liberty, so that they may either omit or do these things differently, without offending God, if no one take offence at it; that is, if they do it, neither from contempt or neglect of the ministry, nor from wantonness, or ambition, nor with a desire of contention or novelty, nor with an intention of offending the weak. And the reason is, *that laws are observed properly, when they are observed according to the intention and design of the lawgiver*. The church, however, ought to see to it that such ordinances as are established concerning things which are indifferent, be observed not out of regard to her authority, or command, but only for the sake of observing order, and avoiding offence. As long, therefore, as the order of the church is not violated, and offence is not given, the conscience of every one ought to be left free; for it is sometimes necessary, not on account of the command of the church, or of the ministry, but for just causes to do, or to omit things which are indifferent. We may here quote the language of Paul as in point; "If any of them that believe not, bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go, whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question, for conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake; for the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; conscience, I say, not thine own, but the other; for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience. For if I by grace, be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?" Cor. 10: 28—31. See also Acts 15: and 1 Cor. 11.)

Obj. But if the edicts of magistrates bind the conciences of men, why do not the traditions of the church also? Ans. The cases are not the same. God has given to the magistracy the authority to frame civil laws,

and has threatened to pour out his wrath upon all those who violate these laws; but he has given no such authority to the church, or to her ministers, but requires merely that their laws and ordinances be observed according to the rule of charity: that is, with a desire of avoiding offence, and not as if there were any necessity in the case, as though the conscience were bound thereby. The Scriptures expressly teach this difference: "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you." "Neither as being lords over God's heritage." "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holyday." "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." (Matt. 20: 25. 1 Pet. 5: 3. Col. 2: 16. Gal. 5: 1.) The reasons of this difference are evident: 1. Because there is a great difference between the civil magistrate, whose province it is to exercise authority over his subjects, and to compel such as are obstinate to yield obedience by corporal punishment, and the ministry of the church, to whom no such power is granted; but who are entrusted with the office of teaching men in reference to the will of God. 2. Because when ecclesiastical ordinances are violated without any offence being given thereby, there is no violation of the first table of the Decalogue, to which they ought to contribute; but when civil enactments are violated, even though there may be no offence, there is a violation of the second table, inasmuch as this cannot occur without detracting something from the commonwealth, or giving some occasion of injury to it.

To this it is replied: Obedience ought rather to be rendered to that office which is the greater and more honorable. Therefore those things which have been instituted by the ministers of the church, bind more strongly the consciences of men, than civil laws. We reply to the antecedent: That greater obedience is due to that office which is the more honorable, in those things which belong properly to the office itself. But it is the proper office of the civil magistrate to make laws, which are to be observed out of regard to the command itself; whilst it belongs properly to the ecclesiastical ministry to institute ceremonial precepts, which shall be observed, not on account of the command of men, but for the sake of avoiding offences.

Fourthly, there are human enactments which are in opposition to the commands of God. These God forbids us to comply with, whether they be enjoined by the civil magistrate, or by the church and her ministry, according as it is said: "We ought to obey God rather than men." "Why do ye transgress the commandment of God by your tradition." (Acts 5: 29. Matt. 15: 3.)

From what has now been said we may easily answer the following objections: 1. God commands us to yield obedience to the enactments of men. Ans. God require us to comply with, 1. Such as are good and not opposed to his word. 2. Such as he himself has commanded by men, that worship may be thus paid unto him. 3. Such civil enactments as depend upon the authority of men, to which we render obedience not for the sake of divine worship, but for conscience sake. 4. Such ecclesiastical ordinances as those which we observe, not for the sake of worship, nor for conscience sake, but that we may avoid giving any offence.

Obj. 2. Those things which the church commands, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, are divine ordinances, having respect to the worship of

God. But the church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, institutes ordinances which are good and profitable. Therefore these ordinances bind the consciences of men, and have respect to the worship of God. Ans. That which is general in regard to the things which the church prescribes, under the influence af the Holy Spirit, pertains to the worship of God. This comprehends the divine laws which require a proper regard to charity, avoiding offences, with the preservation of order and propriety in the church. The ordinances or institutions which have respect to what is general, being prescribed by the church under the influence of the Holy Spirit, are also divine, inasmuch as they form a part of those laws, the care and keeping of which God has committed to us in his word. But the good prescriptions of the church are human, or they are the prescriptions of men, in as far as they particularly designate what is declared, rather than what is expounded generally in these divine laws. Hence those ordinances do not constitute the worship of God, which the church by her own authority and in her own name advises, determines and commands, even though she be directed by the influence of the Holy Spirit in choosing and determining them. For the Holy Spirit declares to the church both what is profitable for the purpose of avoiding offences, and also that these things which are enjoined for the sake of avoiding offences are neither the worship of God, nor necessary to be observed, except for the purpose of avoiding every occasion of offence, as appears from the following declarations of Holy Writ: "I speak this by permission, and not of commandment." "And this I speak for your own profit; not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction." (1 Cor. 7: 6, 35.) So Paul also forbids to eat of things offered in sacrifice to idols, if by so doing we give offence to a weak brother; under other circumstances he leaves every one free to act as he chooses. So the Apostles also, when assembled in Jerusalem, commanded, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, abstinence from things strangled and from blood; and yet they granted liberty to the church to act with freedom in this matter, where no offence would follow.

Obj. 3. God is worshipped in those things which are done to his glory. Those things which the church decides upon, are done to the glory of God. Therefore they also constitute the worship of God. Ans. Those things are indeed the worship of God which are done to his glory, and which he has commanded to this end, that we may declare our obedience to him by these works; but not those which contribute to the glory of God by an accident: that is, which lead sometimes to the performance of the things commanded by God on account of accidental causes, which, if they do not concur, God may still be honored, as well by those who do these things as by those who omit them, if they only be done or omitted of faith.

Obj. 4. But certain of the saints have worshipped God with acceptance without any express commandment of his; so Samuel offered sacrifices in Ramah, Elijah in Mount Carmel, Manoah in Zorah, &c. (1 Sam. 7: 17. 1 Kings 18: 19. Judges 13: 19.) Therefore there are certain works which constitute the worship of God, although not expressly commanded by him. Ans. These examples establish nothing conclusively in reference to will-worship; for, in the first place, as it respects these sacrifices, they were the worship of God, because they were works commanded by him. And then as it regards the place appointed for offering sacrifices, the saints

of old were free before the erection of the temple. Samuel fixed upon the place where he lived as the one in which he would offer sacrifices, this being the most convenient. And the prophets very well knew that the worship of God did not consist in the circumstance of place, in respect to which the godly were left free, while as yet the ark of the covenant had no fixed place. And then, finally, as it respects the persons themselves who offered these sacrifices, they had extraordinary power conferred upon them, being prophets, as Samuel and Elijah were. And as it respects Manoah, the father of Sampson, he either did not sacrifice himself, but delivered the sacrifice over to the angel whom he supposed to be a prophet, to be offered up; or else he himself offered it, being commanded by the angel, so that nothing was done contrary to the law.

So we may also easily return an answer to the other examples which are adduced by our opponents. Abel and Noah, say they, offered sacrifices; (Gen. 4 & 8) but they did not do it without a command from God; for they offered their sacrifices in faith as Paul affirms in Heb. 11. Faith now cannot be without the word of God. But the Rechabites, say they, of whom we have an account in the 35th chap. of Jeremiah, abstained from the use of wine, and from agriculture, according to the command of their father, Jonadab, and were commended by God. But Jonadab did not design to institute any new worship of God, but merely desired by this civil command to do away with drunkenness and such sins as accompany it. So it was not the kind of food and raiment which John the Baptist ate and wore, that commended him to the divine favor, but his sobriety and temperance, and worship of God. Nor was it the raiment, made of sheep and goat skins, nor their wandering in mountains, dens and caves, that made the saints of old (Heb. 11) approved before God, but their faith and patience in enduring afflictions and trials.

Obj. 5. Whatever is done of faith, and is acceptable to God, constitutes divine worship. The works which men perform voluntarily, are done of faith and so please God. Therefore, they constitute his worship. Ans. The major proposition is particular. To say, moreover, that a thing pleases God is not a sufficient definition of divine worship, inasmuch as actions which are indifferent may also be done of faith and so please God, although in a different manner from what his worship properly so called pleases him; for this pleases God in such a way, that the opposite of it displeases him, and so cannot be done of faith; whilst actions of indifference are approved of in such a way that their opposites may not be displeasing to God, and hence both may be done of faith, which rests assured that the work and the person both please God. Thus far we have spoken merely of the command itself. The exhortation contained in this second commandment remains to be explained. Before proceeding to this, however, we shall first give an explanation of the doctrine respecting images, which belongs properly to this commandment, and is contained in the two following Questions of the Catechism:

Question 97. Are images then not at all to be made?

Answer. God neither can nor may be represented by any means; but as to creatures, though they may be represented, yet God forbids us to make, or have any resemblance of them, either in order to worship them, or to serve God by them.

EXPOSITION.

We may here remark, that the words of the second commandment forbid two things. They *first* forbid us to make and to have images, saying: *Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing*, &c. Then they forbid us to worship images and likenesses with divine honor, saying: *Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them.* In speaking of the first thing which is here forbidden, we must enquire, *Are all images and likenesses prohibited?* and if not all, *what, and in how far are* they lawful, or unlawful? In speaking of the second thing forbidden by this commandment, we must enquire, *Is all adoration or bowing* to images forbidden, and can it by any means be defended?

CONCERNING IMAGES AND PICTURES IN CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

The things to be considered in connection with this subject, may be comprehended under the following heads:

I. *Whether, and how far images are forbidden in Churches by this commandment:*
II. *Whether the worship of images can be defended:*
III. *Why images are to be removed out of Christian Churches:*
IV. *How, and by whom they are to be removed.*

The first and second of these propositions belong here; the third and fourth belong to the 98th Question of the Catechism.

I. WHETHER, AND HOW FAR IMAGES ARE FORBIDDEN IN CHURCHES BY THIS COMMANDMENT.

The Hebrew words *zelem* and *themunah* usually signify an image; *pesel* signifies a graven image, whilst *Hhezebh* signifies an idol, or statue, from *Hhazabh*, which signifies to trouble, to lament, to grieve, because an idol disturbs and agitates the conscience. The Greeks express the word image by εικων; and by ειδωλον, they express any likeness, and especially that which men make unto themselves for the purpose of representing and worshipping God, be it a solid statue, or a mere naked image or picture. Among the Latins *imago* signified any likeness represented or painted: *statua* signified a solid image either graven or cast: *simulacrum* signified the same thing; so also *idolum*, borrowed from the Greek. The Papists, that they may defend with greater plausibility their worshipping of images, make a distinction between *idolum* and *simulacrum*. The latter they contend signifies the image of something really existing, whilst the former is the image of something imaginary; from which they conclude that idols, and their worship are prohibited, but not images. That this distinction, however, is vain and of no force is apparent, 1. From the etymolgy of both words, according to which it appears that they do not differ any more than *panis* and αρτος, both of which signify bread. The only difference is that the one is a Latin, the other a Greek word. For as ειδωλον, which means a form, is derived from the Latin *formando*, which means to form or fashion, so *simulacrum* is derived from *simulando* which means to counterfeit, according to the testimony of Lactantius. 2. The interpreters of the Scriptures use

both words indiscriminately; for the Septuagint everywhere translates the Hebrew *Hhezebh* by εἰδωλον, whilst the Latin interpreters translate it by *simulacrum*. 2. Both words are used indiscriminately by good and standard writers. Cicero, in his first book, *de Finibus*, uses these words in the same sense. Euripides calls the shades or ghosts of Palydorus and Achilles εἰδωλον, which means an idol. An idol is, therefore, not only an image of something imaginary, but also of something real. So simulacrum is also used for the image of something imaginary. Pliny, for instance, calls the idol of Ceres an imaginary god, *simulacrum:* and Vitruvius calls the image or idol of Diana, *simulacrum*. Hence the distinction which is made between these words is ungrounded. So much concerning the words which express what we call an image.

We must now proceed to the question itself, in regard to which we may remark, that this commandment does not absolutely forbid us to make, or to have images, likenesses and statues, because the art of painting, sculpture, casting and embroidery, is reckoned among the gifts of God which are good and profitable to human life, and God himself had certain images placed in the tabernacle; (Ex. 31: 3; 35: 30) and Solomon had upon his throne images of lions, and had figures of palm-trees and cherubims carved upon the walls of the temple by the command of God. (1 Kings 6: 23, 29; 10: 19, 20.) *The reason of this is plain and easy to be perceived*, inasmuch as writing and painting are profitable for reviving a recollection of something done, for ornament and for the enjoyment of life. The law does not, therefore, forbid the use of images, but their abuse, which takes place when images and pictures are made either for the purpose of representing or worshiping God, or creatures. Hence all images and likenesses are not simply and wholly forbidden, but only such as are unlawful, among which we may include, *first*, all images or likenesses of God, which are made for the purpose of representing, or worshipping God. That these are all positively forbidden in this commandment, may be argued, 1. From the design of this commandment, which is the preservation of the worship of God in its purity. 2. From the nature of God. God is incorporeal and infinite; it is impossible, therefore, that he should be expressed, or represented by an image which is corporeal and finite, without detracting from his divine majesty, according as it is said: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand; and meted out heaven with a span," &c. "To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" "To whom will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." "Who changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." (Is. 40: 12, 18, 25. Rom. 1: 23.) 3. From the command of God. "Take ye, therefore, good heed unto yourselves, (for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire,) lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female; the likeness of any beast that is," &c. (Deut. 4: 15, 16.) 4. From the cause of this prohibition, which is that these images do not only profit nothing, but also injure men greatly, being the occasion and cause of idolatry and punishment. In short, God ought not to be represented by any graven image, because he does not will it, nor can it be done, nor would it profit any thing if it were done.

There is a memorable saying which Plutarch records of Numa in his life, in these words: "*Numa forbade the Romans to have images of any of the gods, which had the form of man or beast. Nor was there in former times among this people any image of God either painted or graven; and for the first* 170 *years, although they had temples, and sacred places which they had built, yet there was no image or picture of God formed; and that because it was regarded as a great crime to represent heavenly things by earthly, inasmuch as a knowledge of God can only be attained by the mind.*" Damascenus writes, "*That to attempt to represent God is a foolish and wicked affair,*" although he elsewhere evidently defends the worship of images. He is, therefore, condemned with other defenders of images in the seventh council held by Constantine and his son, Leo, which council decreed, among other things, that no images of Christ should be painted or graven, not even as it respects his human nature; because nothing but his humanity could be expressed by art; and those who make such images, seem to establish again the error of Nestorius, or Eutyches.

Secondly, those images and likenesses of creatures are unlawful which are set up in churches, at the corners of the streets, and elsewhere, for the worship of God, or for a perilous ornament. "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them," &c. "Keep yourselves from idols." (1 John 5: 21.)

Those images of creatures, however, may be lawful which are made and kept away from the churches, which are without danger and appearance of idolatry, superstition, or offence, and which are for some political benefit, such as is historical or symbolical, or for some becoming ornament. The images of the lions upon the throne of Solomon, the image of Cæsar stamped upon the coin, &c., were of this kind.

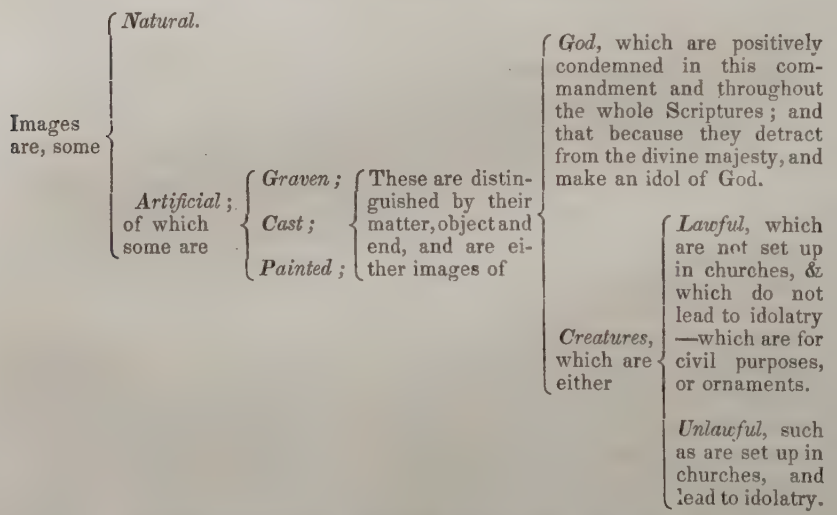
Obj. 1. Thou shalt make no graven image. Therefore God forbids the art of sculpturing. Ans. He forbids the abuse, which occurs when we would make a representation of God, and bind the worship of God to images.

Obj. 2. The Holy Scriptures attribute to God the different members of the human body, and thus declare his nature and properties. Therefore it is also lawful to represent God by images. Ans. There is a difference between these figurative expressions used in reference to God, and images; because in the former case there is always something connected with those expressions which guards us against being led astray into idolatry, nor is the worship of God ordinarily tied to those figurative expressions. But it is different in regard to images, for here there is no such safeguard, and it is easy for men to give adoration and worship to them. God himself, therefore, used those metaphors of himself figuratively, that he might help our infirmity, and permits us, in speaking of him, to use the same forms of expression; but he has never represented himself by images and pictures; neither does he desire us to use them for the purpose of representing him, but has, on the other hand, solemnly forbidden them.

Obj. 3. God formerly manifested himself in bodily forms. Therefore it is lawful for us to represent him by similar signs or forms. Ans. God did indeed do this for certain considerations; but he has forbidden us to do the same thing. Nor is it difficult to perceive the reason of this prohibition. God may manifest himself in any way in which he may please to do so; but it is not lawful for any creature to represent God by any sign which

he himself has not commanded. The examples are therefore not the same. Furthermore, those forms in which God anciently manifested himself had the promise of his presence in them, and that he would hear those to whom he revealed himself in this way. But this cannot be said of those images which are representations of God, without palpable idolatry. The saints of old, therefore, acted properly in adoring God at, or in those forms, as being present in a special manner in them; but to act thus in reference to images is wicked and idolatrous, seeing that it is done out of presumption and levity, without any divine command or promise. Lastly, those visible appearances in and through which God was pleased to reveal himself to his people of old, continued as long as God desired to make use of them, and as long as they did contribute to idolatry. But the images and pictures which men make in imitation of these ancient manifestations of God, have not been devised for the purpose of revealing God, nor are they representations of those ancient manifestations of God, and are therefore the object and occasion of idolatry.

A table of images according to their distinctions.


Images are, some
Natural.
Artificial; of which some are
Graven;
Cast;
Painted;
These are distinguished by their matter, object and end, and are either images of
God, which are positively condemned in this commandment and throughout the whole Scriptures; and that because they detract from the divine majesty, and make an idol of God.
Creatures, which are either
Lawful, which are not set up in churches, & which do not lead to idolatry —which are for civil purposes, or ornaments.
Unlawful, such as are set up in churches, and lead to idolatry.

II. Is all worshipping of Images forbidden, or can this worship be defended?

We return an answer to this question from the second part of this commandment, which positively forbids us to give divine worship or honor to images and pictures, including not only that which is given to creatures, but that also which is given to the true God. "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them."

Obj. 1. But we do not worship the images, say these advocates of images among the Papists, but God, of whom they are signs, according to what the council of Nice teaches: "*That which the image exhibits is God; the image itself, however, is not God. Look thou upon the image; but worship in thy mind what thou secst therein;*" and according to the following

sentiment, expressed by Thomas: "*When thou passest an image of Christ, alway pay homage unto it; yet worship not the image, but that which it shadows forth.*" Ans. 1. We deny that images are signs of God; for the reason that God cannot be truly represented by them, inasmuch as he is immense; and even though he could be represented in this way, yet he ought not, because he has forbidden us to make images representing him, and because it is in the power of no creature to institute signs by which he may be represented. This power belongs to God alone. 2. The cause which is here assigned is of no force; for not only is the worship of images the cause and form of idolatry, but even the worship of God himself, which is paid to images or creatures, is in contradiction to what he in his word requires. This is taught with sufficient clearness in the case of Aaron and Jeroboam, who had images of calves made. For although they said, in both instances, "These be thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt," &c.; "To-morrow is a feast of the Lord;" yet God abhorred and severely punished those who were engaged therein, as being guilty of horrible idolatry. (Ex. 32: 4, 5. 1 Kings 12: 28.) Hence, although those who worship images pretend to honor God in this way, yet it is not God, but the devil, that is worshipped, according to what Paul says of the Gentiles: "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice [to idols], they sacrifice to devils, and not to God;" notwithstanding they also pretend to honor the name of God by these things. (1 Cor. 10: 20.)

Obj. 2. The honor of the sign is the honor of the thing signified. Images are signs of God. Therefore the honor which is paid to images is also paid to God. Ans. Here again the minor proposition must be denied, or else the major distinguished thus: The honor of the sign is the honor of the thing signified only in case the sign is a true sign, and has been instituted by him who has the power to do so; and in case that honor be given to the sign, which the proper author commanded to be given; for it is not the will of him that honors, but of him that is honored, that is the rule according to which we are to pay our respect. Wherefore, inasmuch as God has forbidden both that images should be made of him, and that he should be worshipped at images, which are made for him, or for creatures, it is manifest that he is not honored, but disgraced whenever it is attempted to worship him, against his will, at and under images.

But some one may perhaps say: The contempt which is cast upon the sign, even though it may not have been instituted at the command of God, falls back upon God himself. Therefore the honor, also, that is paid to the sign, is given to God. Ans. We deny the consequence which is here deduced; because contrary results are attributed to things that are contrary only when the opposition of the things which are affirmed depends upon that according to which the subjects are opposed, but not when it depends upon something else, as here, where contempt of God follows that of the sign, be it divinely instituted or not, because an intention to depart from the commandment of God is sufficient to cast dishonor and contempt upon him. But the honor of God does not follow the honor of the sign, unless both the sign and the honor thereof be ordained of God, seeing that the intention to honor God is not of itself sufficient to constitute acceptable worship, unless the manner also be such as God himself has prescribed.

Obj. 3. But if it is lawful to honor the images and monuments of

renowned and well deserving men, it is much more lawful to honor the images of blessed angels and saints. Ans. It is lawful to honor the monuments of great and distinguished men with such respect as that which constitutes a grateful and becoming remembrance of them and their deeds, which they have left behind them as their own monuments, in case it be directed to that use which they themselves would desire it; and, on the other hand, it would be lawful to demolish them, if necessity demanded such a thing, provided it were done without any wish or desire to cast any disrespect upon those whose monuments they are. But it is by no means lawful to attribute divine worship to them, such as that which the Papists pay to their idols, whether it be under the name of *worship* or *service*. Again, the monuments of great and good men should be such as do not lead to idolatry; for if this should be the case, we must not honor them, but utterly abolish them, after the example of Hezekiah, who broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made (2 Kings 18: 4) when it was turned into idolatry, although it had been formerly preserved as a monument of the goodness of God, which he had showed to the children of Israel in the wilderness, when they were bitten of fiery serpents.

Question 98. But may not images be tolerated in the churches, as books to the laity?

Answer. No; for we must not pretend to be wiser than God, who will have his people taught not by dumb images, but by the lively preaching of his word.

EXPOSITION.

This is the objection of those, who grant, indeed, that images and statues of God and the saints are not to be worshipped, but maintain that they should be tolerated in the churches of Christians, as books to the laity, and for other causes, if only they be not worshipped. We must, however, maintain the opposite, which is, that images and likenesses of God, or of the saints, are not to be tolerated in Christian churches, but abolished and removed from the sight of men, whether they be worshipped, or not.

III. Why Images and Pictures are not to be tolerated in Churches.

The reasons on account of which images and statues are not to be tolerated in our churches, but removed, are principally these:

1. Because it is contrary to the express command of God, that images should be made and set up in churches. "Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is," &c. Seeing, now, that God will not allow images to be made, by which he is to be represented, or at which he is to be worshipped, he, in like manner, will not permit those which are made by others, to be tolerated, or retained.

2. Because they have been the occasion, and means of horrible idolatry in the Papal Church.

3. Because God expressly commanded that idols should be removed, as well as every corruption of the true doctrine and worship of God, that he

may in this way declare his displeasure against idolatry. (Ex. 33: 24; 34: 13. Num. 33: 52.)

4. For our confession of the sincere worship, and our hatred to idolatry, which confession consists not only in words, but also in outward actions, appearance and signs. "Ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. For thou art an holy people to the Lord thy God." "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," viz, in heart, in profession and signs. (Deut. 7: 5. 1 John 5: 21.)

5. Because the Scriptures speak in commendation of certain pious kings, such as Asa, Jehu, Hezekiah, Josiah, &c., for having destroyed the images and idols which had been set up. (1 Kings 15: 13. 2 Kings 10: 30; 18: 4; 23: 24.)

6. For the purpose of avoiding offence and preventing superstition and idolatry, so that, by not tolerating ancient images or substituting new ones, the church and ignorant souls may be preserved from the danger and sin which formerly fell upon our fore-fathers, for countenancing idols.

7. That the enemies of the church may not by this spectacle, which looks so very much like idolatry, be driven farther from a profession of the truth and be led to cast reproach upon it. God speaks of this in the following language: "Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare unto you." (Judges 2: 3.) So the Jews, when they see statues and images in the churches of those who profess Christianity, are so much offended at the sight that they are led to hate more inveterately the Christian religion.

8. Lastly, images have never resulted in any good to those who have had them. The people of God, the Jews, were for the most part seduced by them, as sacred history abundantly testifies, especially in the books of the Judges, Kings, and Prophets. We are, therefore, prone by nature to the sin of idolatry, which is followed by those dreadful punishments which God in many instances threatened through Moses. "I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcases upon the carcases of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you." (Lev. 26: 30.) The angel of the Lord, in reproving the Israelites, because they had made a league with the Canaanites, said: "Wherefore I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your side, and their gods shall be a snare unto you." (Judges 2: 3.) For these reasons, therefore, images and statues are not to be tolerated in the churches of those who profess Christianity, but they must be removed, even though they be not adored.

IV. How and by whom are Images to be abolished?

Two things must be carefully observed in removing images —

1. That the doctrine concerning the true worship of God be preached before the idols and images are removed. It was in this way that Josiah proceeded. He first commanded the law of God to be read to all the people, and then proceeded to remove and destroy the images which had been set up. A change in external matters, without showing and explaining the causes, on account of which it is effected, will either lead to hypocrisy, or else it will excite and alienate the minds of the people from those

who effect this change. Let the true doctrine of God's word, therefore, be preached, and the idols will fall to the ground of their own accord.

2. Images and their altars, and all that pertains to idolatry, must be removed, not by private individuals, but by public authority; whether of the magistrates, or of the people, if they have the sovereign power, and in those places in which the church holds the chief sway. It was in this way that God commanded the children of Israel to proceed in reference to this matter; and so we read that they and their pious kings acted. Paul, on the other hand, being only a private individual, seeing and disapproving of the idols of the Athenians, Ephesians and others, did not himself break them down, nor did he exhort Christians to do so, but to flee from and avoid them. The reason why the Apostle acted thus arose, no doubt, from the fact that he himself was no magistrate, and that the church had not in those places the chief sway. He, therefore, gives this rule: "What have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without, God judgeth." (1 Cor. 5: 12, 13.)

Obj. 1. But books are retained in the churches and are useful to the laity. Images and statues are books to the laity. Therefore they may be retained in the churches with profit. Ans. Such books only are useful to laymen, which God has delivered to them. But God has prohibited images. We also deny the minor proposition; for the prophets teach very differently. "What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image and a teacher of lies?" "The idols have spoken vanity." (Heb. 2: 18. Zech. 10: 2.) We may deduce this argument from what has now been said: We ought not to speak vain things of God, nor to lie of him, either in word or deed. But wood or graven images are lies of God, seeing that they cannot represent God; yea, by as much as they depart from God, and at the same time lead us from him, by so much is their figure unlike God, and as a matter of consequence they bring it to pass, that we lie concerning God. If we would not, therefore, lie, it is necessary that we should neither make, nor have graven images by which to represent God: for as Jeremiah saith, "The stock is a doctrine of vanities." (Jer. 10: 8.) In this sense, now, we grant that images and pictures are books for the laity; viz., that they partly teach and signify what is not true of God, and partly because by reverencing the thing signified, and the place, when they stand in the church and elsewhere, they easily lead some to superstition and teach the people idolatry, as experience abundantly testifies. We also deny the consequence of the above syllogism, because, although images might teach the unlearned, yet it does not follow from this, that they should be retained in the churches as books that are useful; for God will have his people taught, not by dumb images, but by the lively preaching of his word. Neither does faith come from the sight of images, but by the hearing of the word of God.

Obj. 2. The command which respects the abolishing of images, is ceremonial. Therefore it does not pertain to Christians, but only to Jews. Ans. We deny the antecedent: for it is no ceremonial requirement to abolish those things which are the instruments, occasions and signs of idolatry. Nor are the causes on account of which this commandment was formerly given altered, so that the glory of God should not be vindicated against idolaters and enemies of the church, and that he should be tempted by our giving to those who are weak and ignorant occasions and induce-

ments to superstition and idolatry to which they are naturally inclined. This commandment, therefore, which forbids our not having images, is moral and of perpetual force.

Obj. 3. Solomon, by the command of God, placed in the temple images of cherubim, lions, oxen, palm-trees, &c. Therefore images may also be tolerated in the church. Ans. The cases are not similar. 1. The figures of the various things and living creatures, such as oxen, lions, palm-trees, cherubims and such like, which Solomon caused to be placed in the temple, were ordered by the special command of God. The case, however, is different with images which are set up in the church at the present day. 2. The images which Solomon had placed in the temple were of such a character that they could not easily lead to superstitious practices; but images of God and the saints may not only lead to superstition, but alas! they have hitherto been the cause of most shameful idolatry in the Papal church. 3. The reason on account of which God commanded Solomon to have the images here alluded to in the temple, was that they might be types of spiritual things; but this cause is now done away with in Christ. Hence images which are now set up in the churches cannot be defended by this example; and it becomes us to obey the general commandment which forbids us to have, and to set up in such places images which are offensive either to the members, or the enemies of the church.

Obj. 4. But pictures and images are not worshipped in the Reformed churches. Therefore they may be tolerated. Ans. 1. God does not only forbid images to be worshipped; but also forbids them from being made, and to have them when made. *Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image*, &c. They are always an occasion of superstition and idolatry to the ignorant, as the experience of the past and present abundantly testifies. 3. They give to the Jews, Turks, Pagans, and other enemies of the church occasion of offence and matter for blaspheming the gospel.

Obj. 5. Images and statues are ornaments in our churches. Therefore they may be tolerated. Ans. 1. The best and true ornament of our churches is the pure and unadulterated doctrine of the gospel, the lawful use of the sacraments, true prayer and worship in accordance with the word of God. 2. Churches have been built, that lively images of God may be seen in them, and not that they should be made the abode of idols and dumb images. 3. The ornament of the church ought not to be contrary to the command of God. 4. It must neither be ensnaring to the members, nor offensive to the enemies of the church.

But some one may perhaps reply; the thing itself and the lawful use of it, must not be taken away merely because it may be abused. Images are ensnaring and offensive merely by accident. Therefore they are not to be removed from the churches. Ans. The first proposition is true, provided the thing be good in its own nature, and the use of it be lawful, and the accident inseparably connected with it, be not condemned of God. If this be not the case, the thing and the use of it, are both unlawful, and therefore to be avoided. But the images of God and the saints, which are placed in our churches for the sake of religion, are neither good, nor is the use of them lawful, but expressly forbidden by the command of God. And not only so, but the accident which is superstition, or idolatry, invariably accompanies the use of these images (notwithstanding the vain pretences of

those who are more fully established, and of their knowledge,) and is equally condemned by the commandment of God.

Obj. 6. All that is necessary is, that men should not, by the preaching of the gospel, have images in their hearts. Therefore it is not necessary that they should be removed from our churches. Ans. We deny the antecedent; because God not only forbids us to have idols in our hearts; but also before our eyes, seeing that he does not merely desire us to be no idolaters, but to avoid even the appearance of idolatry, according as it is said; "Abstain from all appearance of evil." (1 Thes. 5: 22.) Again, such is the depravity of the human heart and its propensty to idolatry, that idols well-polished and adorned, being left before the eyes of men, very soon and readily become seated in the heart, and lead to false notions of religion, whatever may be said by some to the contrary. We may, therefore invert the argument, and reason thus: Images are to be rooted out of the hearts of men by the preaching of the gospel. Therefore they are also to be cast out of our churches: for the doctrine revealed to us from heaven does not merely command us not to worship and adore them, but likewise not to make, or have them. So much concerning the commandment itself.

The exhortation which is added to the second commandment.

The exhortation added to this commandment, *for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me, and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments*, contains five attributes of God which ought to constrain us to render obedience to him.

1. He calls himself *our God*, that is, our creator and preserver—the giver of all the good things which we have enjoyed. In this way he would teach us what base ingratitude it is not to render obedience to him, our benefactor, and what an aggravated thing it is to fall from him into idolatry.

2. He calls himself a *mighty God*—one that is able to punish the wicked, as well as to reward the obedient. He is, therefore, to be feared and worshipped above all others.

3. *A jealous God*, that is, a most rigid defender, and vindicator of his honor, terribly displeased with those who depart from him, or infringe upon his honor, or worship. Inasmuch now as jealousy, or indignation on account of an injury, or baseness, proceeds from love on the part of him, who is injured, God here signifies how ardently he loves those that are his.

4. *A God that visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate him.* In these words God reveals the greatness of his wrath and punishment, in that he threatens unto the children and the grand children, and the great grand-children's children of his enemies, to punish in them the sins of their fathers, in case they also imitate and approve of the sins of their fathers by committing them over again.

Obj. But it is said, Ez. 18, that the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. Ans. It is, however, also said in the 14th verse of the same chapter, by way of reconciliation, "That if a wicked man beget a son that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and doeth not such like; he shall surely live." Hence God threatens that he will punish the sins of the fathers in their children, meaning those who persevere in the sins of their

fathers, whom it is just and proper should be made partakers of their punishment. Should any one reply; That in this way, posterity do not suffer for the sins of their fathers, but only for their own, we answer nay; for there may be many impelling, moving causes of the same effect, and the cause of one punishment may be many sins, and these of different individuals besides those who bear the punishment. And if some one should object still further and say; That the sins of the fathers are not punished in their children, because the punishment which the children suffer, does not reach to the sins of their fathers, we reply, the children are a part of their fathers, so that they feel in themselves, as it were in some part of themselves, what their children suffer.

5. He declares that he is a God, who *sheweth mercy unto thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments.* By this promise, God would magnify his mercy, that so he might the more strongly invite us to obedience by a consideration of the greatness of his mercy and by the desire of our own salvation, and that of our children. And whereas he threatened punishment only to the fourth generation, he here extends his mercy to thousands, that so he might declare that he is more inclined to shew mercy than wrath, and in this way constrain us to love him.

Obj. 1. But the children of many pious persons perish. Ans. The promise is conditional: for God declares in the 18th chapter of Ez., that he will be merciful to the children of the godly if they persevere in the obedience of their fathers, and that he will punish them if they turn away from it. If any one should ask, Why does God not convert all the children of the godly, since they cannot follow the holy example of their fathers without his mercy, we reply, that he will not bind or restrict his mercy to any single individuals included among the posterity of the righteous; but will reserve his election free to himself, that as he converts and saves some from the posterity of the wicked, so he will leave some of the posterity of the righteous in their natural corruption and misery which all deserve by nature, and this he does, that he may show that his own mercy is free, as well in choosing the posterity of the godly as the posterity of the wicked. Again: God does not convert all the posterity of the godly, because he has not bound himself to bestow mercy on all, or the same benefits on all the posterity of the godly. He, therefore, makes good this promise when he bestows temporal blessings upon the wicked descendants of the godly. Lastly: God does not convert all the children of the godly, because he promises this happiness to those who diligently keep his commandments, or to those who are truly godly. But inasmuch as the love of God and the obedience which is in the most holy, are imperfect in this life, the reward which is promised to them is also imperfect, and joined with the cross and chastisements, among which the wickedness and unhappiness of their posterity is not the least, as may be seen in David, Solomon and Josiah.

Obj. 2. Those who keep the commandments of God, obtain mercy. Therefore, we merit something from God by our obedience. Ans. The contrary follows. God says, *I will shew mercy unto them.* Therefore, it is not according to merit; for that which is done out of mercy is not of merit; and contrariwise. The argument is, therefore, false, in assigning that for a cause, which is none.

Obj. 3. This promise and threatening belongs to the whole Decalogue;

why is it, therefore, annexed to this commandment? Ans. It is joined to the second commandment, not that it belongs to it alone, but that we may know that the first and second commandments are the foundation of all the others; and that God might declare that he is especially displeased with those who corrupt his worship, and that he will punish this kind of sin both in them and their posterity, and, on the other hand, that he will also bless the posterity of them, who keep his religion pure and undefiled.

THIRTY-SIXTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 99. What is required in the third command?

Answer. That we, not only by cursing, or perjury, but also by rash swearing, must not profane or abuse the name of God; nor by silence or connivance be partakers of these horrible sins in others; and briefly, that we use the holy name of God no otherwise than with fear and reverence; so that he may be rightly confessed and worshipped by us, and be glorified in all our words and works.

Question 100. Is then the profaning of God's name by swearing and cursing, so heinous a sin, that his wrath is kindled against those who do not endeavour, as much as in them lies, to prevent and forbid such cursing and swearing?

Answer. It undoubtedly is; for there is no sin greater, or more provoking to God, than the profaning his name, and therefore he has commanded this sin to be punished with death.

EXPOSITION.

God, in the first and second commandments, framed the mind and heart for his worship; in the third and fourth the external members and actions.

The third commandment consists of two parts: *a prohibition and threatening.* It first prohibits a rash and inconsiderate use of the name of God; yea, every abuse of the name of God, in whatever false, vain or trifling thing, which tends to cast a reproach upon God, or which does not at least have respect to his glory. *The name of God* signifies in the Scriptures, 1. *The attributes of God.* "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my Name." "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you; this is my Name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." "The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his Name." (Gen. 32: 29. Ex. 3: 15; 15: 3.) 2. *It signifies God himself.* "Let them that love thy Name be joyful in thee." "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord." "I will sing praise to the Name of the Lord most high." "Thou shalt sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and the herd in the place which the Lord shall choose to place his Name there." "I purpose to build an house unto the Name of the Lord my God." (Ps. 5: 11; 116: 13; 7: 17. Deut. 16: 2. 1 Kings 5: 5.) 3. It signifies the *will or*

commandment of God, and that either revealed and true, or feigned by men. "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my Name, I will require it of him." "I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of hosts." (Deut. 18: 19. 1 Sam. 17: 45.) 4. It signifies *the worship of God*, confidence, prayer, praising and professing God. "All the people will walk every one in the Name of his God; and we will walk in the Name of the Lord our God for ever and ever." "Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus." (Micah 4: 5. Acts 21: 13.)

Take the name of the Lord. God does not forbid us to take or to use his name; but he forbids us to do it rashly, which is to use it lightly, falsely, and reproachfully. To use the name of the Lord *lightly*, is to make use of it as in ordinary talk and conversation, contrary to what Christ says, "Let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay." (Matt. 5: 37.) *Falsely*, as in unlawful oaths and perjury; *reproachfully*, as in cursing, blasphemy and sorcery, in which the works of the devil are cloaked under the name of God. The sense then, is, *Thou shalt not use the name of the Lord thy God rashly;* that is, thou shalt not only not forswear, but thou shalt not make any mention of the name of God that would not be honorable to him.

This negative precept has an affirmative included in it; for in prohibiting the wrong use of the name of God, it at the same time enjoins upon us that use which is lawful and honorable, which consists in using the name of God reverently, solemnly, religiously and honorably, and in making no mention of God or of his works and revelations in our conversation, but such as comports with his divine majesty. Hence, *the end of this third commandment is*, that we all render unto God, both publicly and privately, that immediate external worship which consists in confessing and praising his name.

God adds *a threatening* to this commandment, to declare thereby, that this part of obedience is also one of those things, the violation of which is peculiarly displeasing to him, and which he will severely punish. For since praising and glorifying God is the chief and ultimate end for which man was created, God justly demands in the most rigid manner from us that, on account of which he commands all other things; and since man's chief good and enjoyment consists in glorifying God, it follows that the greatest evil consists in reproaching God and taking his name in vain, and so merits the heaviest punishment, according as it is said, "Because, that when they knew not God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened," &c. "Whosoever curseth his God, shall bear his sin; and he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death." (Rom. 1: 21. Lev. 24: 15, 16.)

The virtues of this commandment consists in the lawful and honorable use of the name of God; of which these are parts:

I. THE PROPAGATION OF THE TRUE DOCTRINE respecting the essence, will and works of God, not, indeed, that which belongs to the office of teaching publicly in the church, of which mention is made in the fourth commandment; but that by which every one in his own peculiar sphere is bound

to instruct others privately, and which contributes to the true knowledge and worship of God, as it is said: "Teach them thy sons, and thy son's sons." "Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another." "And when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren." "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs." (Deut. 4: 9; 11: 19. 1 Thes. 5: 11. Luke 22: 32. Col. 3: 16.)

That which is opposed to the propagation of the doctrine concerning the true God includes, 1. *An omission or a neglect* to instruct others, especially our children, and to spread a knowledge of the true doctrine according to our ability, and as opportunity presents itself. "I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth," &c. (Matt. 25: 25.)

2. *Abstaining or refraining from conversation* respecting God and divine things. "Salvation is far from the wicked, for they seek not thy statutes." (Ps. 119: 155.)

3. *Corrupting religion and the doctrine* revealed from heaven, which consists in asserting and propagating what is false concerning God, his will and works. "The prophets prophesy lies in my name." (Jer. 14: 14.)

II. PRAISING AND GLORIFYING GOD, which consists in an acknowledgement of the divine attributes and works, joined with approbation and admiration thereof in the presence of God and creatures, with the design that we may declare our love and reverence to God, in order that he may be exalted above all things, and that our subjection to him may be made manifest. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth." "Let the heavens and the earth praise him," &c. (Ps. 22: 22; 8: 1; 69: 34.)

Those things which are opposed to this virtue are, 1. *Contempt of God*, a neglect of his praise, worship and divine works. "They glorified him not as God." (Rom. 1: 21.)

2. *Blasphemy*, which is to speak such things of God as are opposed to his nature and will, either through ignorance, or through hatred to the truth and to God himself. "Whosoever shall curseth his God shall bear his sin." (Lev. 24: 15.)

3. *All cursing*, by which men speak and ask wicked things of God, against their neighbor, as if God were their executioner to carry into effect their desire of vengeance upon those with whom they are at variance. *To curse* is to ask and desire evil to any one from God. All cursing, now, which proceeds from hatred, and from a desire of private revenge leading to the destruction of our neighbor, is unbecoming and wicked; because it desires that God should be made the executioner of our corrupt wishes and passions. Certain imprecations of the saints against their enemies are, indeed, found in the Psalms and elsewhere; but these are not to be positively condemned, because they are in a great measure prophetical denunciations of punishment against the enemies of God. From these examples we may infer that execrations are at particular times lawful, but with these conditions, 1. If we desire evil things to come upon those upon whom God denounces them, viz., his enemies. 2. If it is done on account of God, without any private hatred, or desire of revenge. 3. If we ask it upon the condition that these things come upon them only in case they remain incorrigible. 4. If we so desire these things, as not to rejoice in their

destruction, but merely to desire that the divine glory be vindicated, and the church delivered.

III. The confession of the truth known concerning God, which consists in declaring what we know with certainty from the holy Scriptures of God and his will, because we declare and make known from a consideration of duty, our knowledge of God, that so we may glorify him and advance the salvation of our fellow men. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." (Rom. 10: 10, 11. 1 Pet. 3: 15.

To this confession of the truth there is opposed, 1. *A denial of the truth*, or an unwillingness on the part of any one to declare what he knows concerning religion for fear of hatred, or the cross, or reproach. This denial is of two kinds. *The first is an entire apostacy* from true religion, which is to cast away the profession of the truth to whatever extent it may have been known and received, which is done with the determined counsel and desire of the heart to oppose God, and which is also accompanied with no grief or sorrow for having rejected the truth, and without any purpose to obey God by individually applying the promise of grace or shewing signs of repentance. Such a denial of the truth is that of which hypocrites and the reprobate are guilty, concerning which it is said, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." "Which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away." (1 John 2: 19. Luke 8: 13.) If this denial be made after the truth has once been certainly known, it becomes the sin against the Holy Ghost, of which none repent, so that no forgiveness is obtained neither in this, nor in the life to come. *The other* denial of the truth *is particular*. It is that which is committed by those who are of weak faith, and results either from error, without being wilful and intentional, or from fear of the cross, whilst there is still remaining in the heart an inclination to cleave to God, and a sorrow on account of this wickedness and denial, with a certain purpose to struggle out of it, and to assent to and obey God by applying individually the promise of grace, and shewing signs of true penitence. The regenerate and elect may be guilty of this denial of the truth; but they struggle out of it, and return again to the confession of the truth in this life. So Peter denied Christ through weakness; but repented of his sin before God.

2. *Dissembling or keeping back the truth*, where the glory of God and the salvation of our neighbor require a confession of it, which is necessary when false views of God, of his word and of the church seem to be confirmed in the minds of men by our silence; or when those things remain unknown, which God will have known for the purpose of vindicating his glory against the calumnies of the wicked, for convincing the obstinate and instructing those who are disposed to learn; or when our silence lays us open to the suspicion of approving what is said and done by the wicked. It was in this way, that the parents of the man born blind, of whom we have an account in the ninth chapter of the gospel of John, dissembled, and also those chief rulers who would not confess Christ for fear of the Jews, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. (John 12: 42.)

3. *An abuse of Christian liberty*, or giving offence in things which are

indifferent, which is done when by the use of such things we confirm the adversaries of God in error, or alienate them from true religion, or by our example provoke them to an imitation accompanied with an evil conscience, of which Paul treats largely in the fourteenth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and also in the eighth and tenth chapters of his first Epistle to the Corinthians.

4. *All scandals and offences in morals*, as, for instance, when those who profess the true religion, lead shameful and offensive lives, denying in works what they profess in words, and so laying the church open to reproach, and the name of God to the foul blasphemies of unbelievers. "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him," as if he would say, they pretend a knowledge of God without faith. "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." (Tit. 1: 16. Rom. 2: 24. See also Ps. 50: 16. Is. 52: 5. 2 Tim. 3: 5.)

5. *An untimely or unseasonable confession of the truth*, by which men stir up and excite the enemies of religion either to contemn or revile the truth, or to bitterness and cruelty against the godly, without advancing the glory of God and the salvation of any one, and without any necessity demanding a confession of the truth at the time and under the circumstances under which it was made. Such an untimely confession Christ prohibits when he says, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." (Matt. 7: 6.) Paul also says: "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." (Tit. 3: 10, 11.) Nor is the declaration of the apostle Peter chap. 3, v. 15, in which he commands us "to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear," at variance with what we have just said, as though no confession were untimely; for the Apostle commands us always to be ready and well prepared to give an answer concerning the sum and foundation of the doctrine of the church, and to repel the calumnies and sophisms by which this doctrine is perverted and evil spoken of by the enemies of religion. But he does not command us to profess and declare all things at all times and before every one; but merely before those who ask a reason or a defence of the hope that is within us, for the purpose of learning, knowing, or judging in reference to it. Hence, if any one should make a mock of religion, or deride the doctrine of the gospel after it has once been sufficiently declared and explained to him, and should ask a reason of our hope, we should not return an answer to him, but leave him to himself. So Christ himself after he had sufficiently confessed and confirmed his doctrine, made no reply to the High Priest and Pilate with reference to the false witnesses, and gave as a reason of his silence, "If I tell you, ye will not believe." (Luke 22: 67.)

IV. Gratitude, which consists in acknowledging and confessing what, and how great benefits we have received from God, and to what obedience we are bound in view of these blessings, and that we will, therefore, cheerfully and heartily yield it unto God to the extent of our power, according as it is said: "Whatsoever ye do in word, or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." "In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his

mercy endureth for ever." (Col. 3 : 17. 1. Thos. 5 : 18. Ps. 107 : 1.)

There is opposed to this virtue, 1. *Ingratitude*, which is when any one either seldom or never thinks and talks of the benefits of God, or if he does think and speak of them, he does it with coldness and dissimulation, so that there is no love to God, or desire of gratitude kindled in his heart. "When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." (Rom. 1 : 21.)

2. *The want of a proper appreciation of the benefits of God*, or not placing such a value upon them as we ought. This occurs whenever any one regards himself, or others, as being the authors of his mercies. "What hath thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it." (1 Cor. 4 : 7.)

3. *A neglect of the gifts of God*, which occurs whenever they are not so employed as to promote the divine glory. The same may also be said of the *abuse* of these gifts. "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed; thou oughtest, therefore, to have put my money to the exchangers," &c. (Matt. 25 : 26, 27.)

V. Zeal for the glory of God, which is an ardent love of God, and sorrow on account of any reproach or contempt cast upon God, with an attempt to throw it from him, and to vindicate the honor of his name. "Phineas hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them." "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant," &c. (Num. 25 : 11. 1 Kings 19 : 10.)

Timidity, or a want of firmness, is opposed to this zeal for God on the side of want, and consists in not being affected with grief on account of reproach cast upon God, and so not caring for the divine glory, and in not having or showing any desire in word and deed to prevent this reproach. Those are guilty of this sin, who, when they might prohibit cursing, and foul blasphemies, by which the name of God is dishonored, do, nevertheless, not prevent them, not being led to it by any zeal for the glory of God.

An erring, false zeal, is opposed to this virtue as it respects the opposite extreme, viz., that of excess. This Paul calls a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. (Rom. 10 : 3.) It consists in being displeased with such words and actions as are erroneously conceived to impair the glory of God. This now may take place whenever we suppose that to be the glory of God, and attempt to defend it, which is not the glory of God, and ought not to be defended; or, when we regard that as detracting from the glory of God and endeavor to repel it, which is not inconsistent with the divine glory, and ought not to be repelled; or still further when it is attempted to prevent an offence, or injury to the divine glory in a way different from that in which it ought to be done.

VI. Calling upon the name of the Lord, which consists in asking of the true God those good things which he has commanded us to ask at his hands. It proceeds from a sense of want on our part, and from a desire to share in the divine bounty; and commences with true conversion to God and faith in the divine promises, for the mediator's sake. "O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name." "Ask and it shall be given you." "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask

any thing according to his will, he heareth us." (Ps. 105 : 1. Matt. 7 : 7. 1 John 5 : 14.)

There is opposed to invocation, 1. *A neglect of calling upon the name of the Lord*, which the Scriptures represent and condemn as the fountain of all ungodliness. "And call not upon the name of the Lord." (Ps. 14 : 4.)

2. *All unlawful calling upon God*, which is the case whenever any condition necessary to acceptable prayer is wanting; under which may be comprehended *idolatrous invocation*, which is either directed to some imaginary deity, or to creatures; or else it restricts the divine presence, and an answer to our prayers to a certain place or thing without any command and promise from God. Such are the prayers of the Heathen, Turks, Jews and all others, who imagine unto themselves another god, beside the true God revealed unto us in his word and works. "Ye worship, ye know not what." (John 4 : 22.) The same thing may also be said of those among the Papists, who pray to the angels and to the saints who have departed this life; because in so doing they attribute to them the honor due to God alone.

3. *The asking of such things as* are contrary to the will and law of God. "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." (James 4: 3.)

4. *A mere lip service*, or such prayers as consist merely in words, or in the motion of the body, without enlisting the feelings of the heart, and in which there is no real desire to obtain the blessing of God — prayers which are without true repentance, without any assurance of being heard, without a subjection of the will to the will of God, without any reference to or thought of the divine promise, without any confidence in Christ, the only mediator, and without any true sense or acknowledgment of unworthiness in the sight of God. "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." "When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make your prayers I will not hear." "Let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." (Matt. 6 : 7. Ps. 1 : 15. James 1 : 7.)

The objections which the Papists bring against us in favor of the Invocation of the Saints.

Obj. 1. The saints, on account of their virtues, are to be honored with the worship either of adoration (λατρεια) or of veneration (δουλεια). But it is not in the former sense that they are to be worshipped; because this form of worship is due to God alone, inasmuch as it attributes to him universal power, providence and dominion, which can be ascribed to God alone. Therefore veneration is due to the saints, or such worship as that which we ascribe to them for their holiness. Ans. We deny the consequence; because the major proposition is incomplete; for besides the worship of *adoration* and *veneration*, which is the distinction here made, there is another kind of veneration, such as is proper to the saints, which is the acknowledgment and celebration of the faith, holiness and gifts for which they were distinguished, obedience to the doctrine which they taught, and an imitation of their lives and piety, concerning which Augustin says:

"*They are to be honored by imitation, but not by adoration.*" This veneration is due to the saints, and we have no desire to take it from them, whether living or dead; but, on the other hand, willingly attribute it to them according to the command of the Apostle: "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." (Heb. 13: 7.) We also deny the minor proposition; because the distinction which they make between the worship of adoration and veneration is of no force, inasmuch as these are not different forms of worship, but one and the same; neither do they belong to the saints, or to any creature, but to God alone, because he knows and hears in all places and at all times the thoughts, the groans and desires of those who call upon him, and relieves their necessities. No one but God can hear those who call upon him. Therefore this honor must be ascribed to him alone, because he hears them that pray. This honor belongs also to Christ, because it is on account of his merits and intercession that God grants unto us the forgiveness of sins, eternal life and all other good things. Hence this honor cannot be transferred to the saints without manifest sacrilege and idolatry, whether it be under the name of adoration, or veneration, or whatever name it may be. This distinction, too, which they make, is of no account, since the words are used indifferently in the original to signify the same thing, both in the Scriptures and in profane writers. Concerning God it is said (Matt. 4: 10), "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt *thou serve.*" Here the Greek word λατρεύσεις is used. And in Matt. 6: 25, it is said, "He cannot *serve God* and Mammon;" in which place the word δουλευειν is used. Which word is also used in the following places, where it is said, "Ye turned to God from idols, to *serve* the living and true God." "They that are such *serve* not our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thes. 1: 9. Rom. 16: 18.) Paul also every where calls himself *the servant of God* (δουλον θεου). In the Greek text, *servile or slavish work* is every where termed λατρευτον. Suidas writes that λατρευειν means the same thing as to serve for wages. Valla shows that this same word signifies *to serve man* as well as *to serve God*, adducing a passage from Xenophon, where a man says that he is ready to risk his life, sooner than his wife should be made *to serve.* And the wife, on the other hand, says that she would rather lose her life, than that her husband should serve, where the word δουλευη is used. Hence these words upon which the Papists base the above distinction do not differ, but express one and the same thing.

Obj. 2. We ought to honor those whom God honors. God honors the saints: "Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. 19: 28.) Therefore they are to be honored by us. Ans. We admit the argument, in as far as it has respect to the honor which God attributes to the saints. In this, however, invocation is never included. God himself says, "I am the Lord: that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Is. 42: 8.)

Obj. 3. The hearing of our secret sighs and groans, which belongs to God by nature, is through grace communicated to the saints. Therefore they are to be invoked. Ans. We deny the antecedent: for God does not communicate those properties by which he desires to be distinguished from creatures; such as immensity, omnipotence, infinite wisdom, seeing and knowing the heart, hearing prayer, &c. — these are properties which God

communicates to no creature, neither by nature nor by grace." "For thou only knowest the hearts of the children of men." (2 Chron. 6 : 30.)

Obj. 4. God has communicated to the saints the power of working miracles, which is, nevertheless, a property belonging to himself alone. Therefore, he communicates to the saints at least some of the properties by which he is distinguished from creatures, so that they may have a knowledge of the thoughts and desires of those who pray unto them. Ans. 1. The consequence which is here drawn is of no force; for it does not follow, even though it were true (which we do not admit) that God had communicated some of his properties to the saints, and that the hearing of prayer is included amongst them, if the Scriptures do not teach the fact. 2. Nor is the reason which is assigned of any force, that the saints have a knowledge of the desires of those who invoke them, because they have been endowed with the gift of working miracles. For the power of working miracles is not transfused into the saints; nor do they perform these miracles by their own power, but merely as ministers. Hence, the saints are said to do these things in a figurative sense, when God employs them as ministers, and joins the working of a miracle, as the sign of his presence, power and will.

Obj. 5. Some prophets seemed to know the thoughts and counsels of other men: so Ahijah knew the thoughts of the wife of Jeroboam; Elisha knew the thoughts of the king of Syria; Peter knew the thoughts of Ananias and Sapphira, &c. (1 Kings 14 : 6. 2 Kings 6 : 12. Acts 5 : 3.) Therefore, God has communicated to the saints a knowledge of the hearts of men. Ans. 1. Examples that are few in number and of an extraordinary character do not constitute a general rule. 2. These persons knew these things by the gift of prophecy with which they were endowed; and yet they did not know them always, but only at that time, when the good of the church required it: nor was it by any power lodged within them, by which they were enabled to know the heart, but by a divine revelation; nor did they know all things, but only such as God was pleased to reveal to them. Hence, it does not appear that the saints, after death, are also endowed with the gift of prophecy, since there is no need of it in eternal life.

Obj. 6. The angels in heaven rejoice over the repentance of sinners. (Luke 15 : 10.) Therefore, they know when men exercise true penitence, and must also have a knowledge of the desires of those who call upon them in prayer. Ans. A cause that is inferred from an effect which may result from other causes, is not of much force or consequence. For it is not necessary that the angels should know the repentance of the sinner by looking into the heart, inasmuch as they may know it either from the effects and signs which accompany it, or from a divine revelation.

Obj. 7. The soul of the rich man when in hell saw Abraham in heaven, and addressed prayer to him, whom Abraham also heard. The rich man likewise knew the state and condition of his five brethren who were still on earth. Therefore, the saints in heaven see and know the desires and condition of those who are upon the earth, and are to be invoked. Ans. No doctrine can be established from allegories and parables. That that, now, is an allegory, by which Christ desired to express the thoughts, torments and condition of the ungodly who are suffering punishment, is evident from this, that it possesses all the parts of a parable. Hence, it establishes nothing in favor of the invocation of the saints. And even though all these things had been done as they are represented, yet they prove nothing as it

respects the doctrine of the invocation of the saints, since Abraham is said to have known these things by speech, and not because he had a knowledge of the secret thoughts of the heart.

Obj. 8. Christ knows all things, according to his human nature. Therefore, the saints also have a knowledge of all things. Ans. The examples are not the same. Christ's human understanding perceives and knows, and his bodily eyes and ears hear and see all things which he, according to his human nature, desires to perceive, either with his mind or external senses, on account of its personal union with the divine nature which reveals these things, or on account of his office as mediator. But it cannot be proven from the Scriptures that all things are revealed to the angels and saints, which are made known to the human understanding of Christ, by his Divinity.

Obj. 9. The images of all things are reflected, or appear in the vision and face of the Trinity. The holy angels and blessed men who have departed this life see the face of the Deity, as it is said, "In heaven the angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 18: 10.) Therefore they, in this way, see and know all that we do, suffer, think, &c. Ans. 1. The major proposition is uncertain, and cannot be proven from the Scriptures. 2. Nor can the minor be established; for it is said, "No man hath seen God at any time." (John 1: 18.) 3. Although the angels and saints in heaven have a clear knowledge of God, yet we are not to suppose that they naturally know all things, which are in God. For if this were the case their knowledge would be infinite, or in other words, it would be equal to the knowledge of God, which is absurd, and contrary to the testimony of Scripture, which declares that the angels are ignorant of the day of judgment. God reveals to every one, both in heaven and on earth, as much as he will according to his own good pleasure.

Obj. 10. The friendship and intercourse of the saints with God and Christ is so great, that it is not possible that a revelation of those things which we ask at their hands should be withheld from them. Ans. That consequence which is drawn from an insufficient cause, is of no force. For this friendship and intercourse will continue, although God does not reveal to the saints as much as they desire, but merely those things which it is profitable for them to know, for his glory and for their own happiness.

Obj. 11. Christ is the mediator of redemption; the saints are mediators of intercession. Therefore there is nothing detracted from Christ, if the saints are invoked as intercessors, and as those who plead with God in our behalf. Ans. We deny the distinction that is here made; because the Scriptures teach that Christ is the only mediator, and that he has not only redeemed us by once offering himself for us upon the cross, but that he also continually appears before the Father, and makes intercesssion for us. (See Heb. 5: 7, 9; 7: 27. John 19: 9. Rom. 8: 34. Heb. 9: 24. 1 John: 2.)

Obj. 12. Christ alone is mediator by virtue of his own merit and intercession; the saints are mediators and intercessors by virtue of the merit and intercession of Christ: that is, their intercessions with God in our behalf avail for the sake of the merit and intercession of Christ. Therefore that which is peculiar to Christ is not transferred to the saints. Ans. Those who make intercession in this way, detract from the honor of Christ

as much as in the former case, which will appear by making in the antecedent a full enumeration of the ways in which the honor of Christ is transferred to others; for not only those who by their own virtue, but even those who, by the virtue of Christ, are said to merit for us from God those good things promised for the sake of Christ's merits alone, are substituted in the place of Christ. And again: if the prayers of the saints are pleasing to God, and heard on account of the merit and intercession of Christ, they cannot please God, nor obtain anything for us by their own holiness and merits, as the Papists teach; for he who stands in need of a mediator and intercessor, cannot appear as an intercessor for others, although he may pray for others. Hence our adversaries overthrow, by their own argument, the doctrine which they vainly attempt to establish.

Obj. 13. Those who pray for us in heaven are to be invoked. The saints offer prayers in our behalf in heaven. Therefore they are to be addressed in prayer. Ans. There is here an error in taking that as a cause which is none; for the mere fact that any one prays for another is not a sufficient reason why we should address prayer to him. We readily grant that the saints in heaven do ardently desire the salvation of the church militant, and that their prayers are heard according to the counsels of God; but that the saints know the misfortunes and business of every one in particular, and that they hear the prayers which may be addressed to them, we deny.

Obj. 14. God said, Jer. 15: 1: "Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people." Therefore the saints stand before God, and make intercession for us. Ans. 1. But even though we were to grant the whole argument, yet it does not, therefore, follow, as we have already shown, that we ought to pray unto them. 2. The language which is here quoted is figurative. It introduces the dead, and represents them praying, as though they were living; so that the sense is, if Moses and Samuel were yet living, and would pray for this wicked people, as they prayed for them and were heard when they lived upon earth, yet they could not obtain grace and pardon for them. There is a similar passage found in Ez. 14: 4, which must be explained in like manner.

Obj. 15. The Lord said through Isaiah: "I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake." (2 Kings 19: 34.) Therefore God confers benefits upon men upon the earth, for the sake of the merits and intercessions of David, and of other saints after death. Ans. But it was not in respect to the merits of David, but in respect to the promise of the Messiah, who was to be born from the house of David, that God promised to protect and defend the city referred to. And if any one should object, and say that the deliverance of the city of David from the assault of the Assyrians might have been effected without the benefit and promise of the Messiah, and was therefore promised on account of the merits of David: we reply that they err who imagine that the benefits of Christ extend merely to those things or promises, upon the performance of which the promises made to David with reference to the Messiah could only be preserved, and receive their fulfillment. For all the benefits of God, including those that are temporal as well as those that are spiritual—those that were granted before the coming of the Messiah as well as those which have been granted since—those without which the

promise of the Messiah could, as well as those without which it could not be fulfilled, are all conferred upon the church for the sake of Christ. "For the promises of God in him [Christ] are yea, and in him, Amen." (2 Cor. 1: 20.)

Obj. 16. Jacob said of the sons of Joseph, "Let my name be on them, and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac." (Gen. 48: 16.) Therefore it is lawful to call upon the saints who have departed this life. Ans. This is to misunderstand the figure of speech which is here employed, which is a Hebrew phrase, meaning not adoration, but an adoption of the children of Joseph; so that the sense is, *Let them be called after my name*, or let them take their name from me: that is, let them be called my sons, and not my grand-children. The phrase is similar to that found in Isaiah 4: 1, where it is said: "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, Let us be called by thy name:" that is, let us be called thy wives.

Obj. 17. Eliphaz says to Job, chapter 5, v. 1, Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the saints wilt thou turn." Therefore Job is commanded to implore help from some one of the saints. Ans. This passage is evidently at war with the doctrine of the invocation of the saints: for it affirms that the angels so far excel men in purity, that they will not make answer, or appear when addressed or invoked by men.

Obj. 18. Christ says, Matt. 25: 40, "Inasmuch as ye have done it, unto one of the least of my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Therefore the invocation of the saints is an honor, which is showed to Christ himself. Ans. Christ does not speak of the invocation of the saints; but of the duty of love which it becomes us to perform towards the afflicted members of his church in this life. The passage, therefore, furnishes no proof in favor of the invocation of the saints.

Obj. 19. "The Angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah against which thou hast indignation these three score and ten years?" (Zech. 1: 2.) Therefore the angels pray for men in their times of need and distress, and so are to be prayed unto. Ans. 1. But this passage furnishes no proof that all the angels know the wants and afflictions of all men. The calamities of the Jews were manifest not only to the sight of angels, but also to men. 2. We deny the consequence which is here drawn from the angels to the saints who have departed this life: for the care and defence of the church, in this world, has been committed to the angels. They are, therefore, conversant with the things of this world, and see our wants and necessities, which the saints do not, inasmuch as this charge is not committed to their care. 3. The consequence which is here drawn, that we must pray unto the angels, because they pray for us, is in like manner, of no force, as we have already shown.

Obj. 20. Judus Maccabeus saw in a vision the High Priest, Onias, and Jeremiah the prophet, praying for the people. (2 Mac. 15: 14.) Therefore the saints who have departed this life pray for us, and are to be invoked. Ans. No doctrine can be established by the authority of an apocryphal book. We also deny the consequence which is here deduced; for not every one that prays for us, is to be prayed to by us.

Obj. 21. Baruch says, "Hear now the prayers of the dead Israelites."

(Bar 3: 4.) Therefore the saints pray for us, and are to be invoked. Ans. We may return the same answer to this objection that we did to the preceding one, that an apocryphal book proves nothing. There is also a misunderstanding of the figure of speech here used; for those who are called *the dead Israelites* are not such as had departed this life, but such as were living and calling upon God, but who, on account of their calamities, were similar to those who were dead.

Obj. 22. It is not permitted to come into the presence of a prince without the intercession of some one. Therefore much less can we come into the presence of God, without some one to appear before him as our intercessor. Ans. We grant the whole argument; for without Christ, the mediator, no one can have access to God, as Christ himself says, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14: 6.) Ambrose very appropriately and forcibly answers the above objection in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, where he thus writes: "*Some men are wont to use a miserable excuse, saying that we obtain access to God through his righteous saints in the same way in which any one comes into the presence of a prince, which is through his attendants. Well: is any one so mad and unmindful of his own safety, as to transfer the honor of the King to any of his attendants, since those who have been found to do this, have been condemned as guilty of treason. And yet these persons suppose that those are not guilty of treason against God, who transfer the honor of his name to creatures, and forsaking their Lord, worship their fellow servants, as if this accomplished any thing in the way of assisting them in the service of God. We come into the presence of a king through his nobles and attendants, because he is a man as we are, and does not know to whom he ought to entrust the affairs of his kingdom. But as it respects God, from whom nothing is concealed, and who knows the merits of all, we need no one to secure us an access to him, but a devout mind. For wherever such an one speaks, he will answer nothing,*" &c. Chrysostrom writes: "*The Canaanitish woman did not ask of James, nor did she beseech John, nor did she go to Peter, nor did she come to the whole corps of the Apostles, nor did she seek any Mediator: but instead of all these, she took repentance for her companion, which repentance supplied the place of an advocate, and in this way she went to the chief fountain.*" So much concerning the sixth virtue comprehended in this commandment, which virtue we have defined as invocation, or calling upon God.

VII. LAWFUL OR RELIGIOUS SWEARING, which is comprehended in calling upon God. By this the person who takes an oath desires that God would be a witness to what he affirms, that he has no desire to deceive in the thing concerning which he makes oath, and that God may punish him if he practices any deception. This form of swearing is authorised by God, who designs that it may be a bond of truth between men, and a testimony that he is the author and defender of truth.

That which is opposed to swearing religiously includes, 1. *A refusing to take an oath* when the glory of God and the safety of our neighbor require it at our hands. "An oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife" (Heb. 6: 16.)

2. *Perjury or forswearing*, as when any one knowingly and willingly deceives by an oath, or does not keep a lawful oath; for to forswear is either to swear to that which is false, as for instance, that thou art not

guilty of murder when thou hast slain a man; or not to perform a thing lawfully sworn.

3. *An idolatrous oath*, which is taken not by the true God alone.

4. *An oath taken in regard to that which is unlawful*, as the oath of Herod.

5. *Oaths which are made rashly*, and from levity, without any necessity or sufficient cause. It is of this that the Scriptures speak when they forbid swearing. (See Matt. 5: 23. James 5: 12.) The doctrine respecting the oath is contained and explained in the following Questions of the Catechism.

THIRTY-SEVENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 101. May we then swear religiously by the name of God?

Answer. Yes; either when the magistrates demand it of the subjects, or when necessity requires us thereby to confirm fidelity and truth, to the glory of God, and the safety of our neighbor; for such an oath is founded on God's word, and therefore was justly used by the saints, both in the Old and New Testament.

Question 102. May we also swear by saints, or any other creatures?

Answer. No; for a lawful oath is a calling upon God, as the one who knows the heart, that he will bear witness to the truth, and punish me if I swear falsely; which honor is due to no creature.

EXPOSITION.

In these two Questions the doctrine respecting the oath is explained at large.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE OATH.

Concerning this we must enquire,

I. *What is an oath?*
II. *By whom are we to swear?*
III. *Is it lawful for Christians to make oath?*
IV. *What are the things concerning which we are to make oath?*
V. *Are all oaths to be kept?*

I. What is an oath?

An oath is often used in the Scriptures for the whole worship of God, as, "Thou shalt swear by his name." "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts." "Every knee shall bow unto me, every tongue shall swear." (Deut. 10: 20. Is. 19: 18; 45: 23.) Concerning the worship of the New Testament it is said: "He who blesseth himself in the earth, shall bless himself in the God of truth, and he that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the God of truth." "If they will diligently learn the ways of my people, to swear by my name, then shall they be built in the midst of my people."

(Is. 65: 16. Jer. 12: 16. The reason of this is that we profess him as our God, by whom we swear. *An oath, properly speaking, is a calling upon God, as the one who knows the heart, that he will bear witness to the truth, and punish me if I swear falsely.* It is in this way that the Catechism defines a lawful oath, which definition is taken from the form of swearing which the apostle Paul uses, when he says, "I call God for a witness upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth." (2 Cor. 1: 23.)

It is said in the definition just given, *that God will bear witness;* viz., by preserving and doing good to him that swears, if he swear religiously, and by punishing and destroying him if he swear falsely. For the oath was instituted by God, that it might serve as a bond of truth between men, and be a testimony that God is the author and defender of truth.

II. By whom are we to swear?

We must swear by the name of the true God alone; 1. Because God has commanded that we swear by him alone, as he alone is to be feared and worshipped. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and shalt swear by his name." (Deut. 10: 20.) 2. God positively forbids us to swear by any other name. "Make no mention of the names of other gods." (Ex. 23: 13.) 3. God wills that the worship of invocation be given to him alone, and condemns those who in their oaths join creatures with himself. The oath now, according to the definition, is one of the ways in which we call upon God, being comprehended in it. 4. An oath ascribes to him by whom it is taken, a knowledge of hearts, omniscience, omnipresence, &c. And it is indeed necessary that he by whom we swear should be possessed of infinite wisdom, and have a knowledge of the heart; because when oaths are taken it is not concerning things which are manifest, and of which there is no doubt, but of things unknown and uncertain, and of which he only, who has a knowledge of all hearts, can judge whether men speak the truth, or that which is false. But God alone knows the heart, is omniscient and every where present. And as Christ and the Holy Ghost are God, and know all things, as the following passages of Scripture sufficiently testify, we are also to swear by them. "He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man." "The Spirit searcheth all things." (John 2: 24, 25. 1 Cor. 2: 11.) 5. We commit the execution of punishment to him by whom we swear, and also attribute such power to him as is necessary to maintain the truth, and punish those who are guilty of perjury. But God alone is possessed of such power, and inflicts punishment upon the wicked. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt. 10: 28.) Men cannot be the avengers of those who are guilty of perjury, inasmuch as those who swear falsely may escape the judgment of men, either because they do not know the heart, so as to see whether those who swear are practising a deception or not, or because those who perjure themselves are too powerful to be punished by men. It follows, therefore, that we must not take an oath except by the name of God alone.

It is apparent, from what has now been said, that oaths which are taken by the saints and other creatures are idolatrous, and prohibited by God.

Obj. But Joseph swore by the life of Pharaoh. (Gen. 42: 15.) Therefore it is lawful to swear by men and creatures. Ans. There are some who admit that Joseph sinned in following the custom of the Gentiles, who were wont to swear by things, that his brethren might not by this means recognise him. But we may give a different reply to the objection, by maintaining that his language does not, properly, contain an oath, but merely a strong affirmation; so that the sense is, *As truly as Pharaoh lives, or is in safety;* or, *As truly as I desire him to be in safety, so truly do I affirm these things.* The same interpretation must be given to all other asseverations of a similar character, instances of which may be found in 1 Sam. 1: 27; 15: 55; 20: 3; 25: 26. These forms of speech are not properly oaths, but strong declarations, made for the sake of placing something in the clearest light by comparing it with something known and manifest; so that we are to understand them as meaning that those things which are affirmed are as certain, as that he liveth, who is named by the person making the declaration.

III. Is it lawful for Christians to take an Oath?

That it is lawful to swear religiously by the name of God, when the magistrates demand it, or otherwise when necessity requires, may be proven by these four arguments:

1. That the glory of God may be promoted. Truth, with its manifestation, is glorious to God.

2. That it may contribute to the safety of others. Our safety consists in the maintenance of truth, especially heavenly truth.

3. The word of God authorizes and sanctions lawful swearing.

4. The saints have at different times taken oaths under a religious form.

The Anabaptists take exceptions to what we have here taught respecting the oath, and maintain that whilst it was lawful for the fathers who lived under the Old Testament to swear, we who live under the New Testament are prohibited. Hence, in order to meet their objections, we must add to the reasons already given the following additional considerations:

5. Christ says, "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it." (Matt. 5: 17.) This, now, was spoken with reference to the moral law, to which the oath had respect. Hence, Christ has not prohibited those who live under the New Testament to swear religiously, when necessity demands it.

6. The moral worship of God is perpetual. A lawful oath forms a part of the moral worship, being one of the ways in which we call upon God. Therefore it is perpetual.

7. The prophets, in describing the worship of the Christian church, call it a swearing by the name of God. "He that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the God of truth." (Is. 65: 16.) Therefore those who live in the Christian church are not prohibited from swearing religiously.

8. The same thing may be argued from the design of the oath, which is a confirmation of fidelity and truth, and a removal of strife, which design is profitable, lawful and necessary for the church and the state, and at the same time honorable to God. "An oath for confirmation is to them

an end of all strife." (Heb. 6: 16.) Such, now, being the design of the oath, it is manifest that it is not only lawful, but even necessary for Christians to take it.

8. From the examples of Christ and the saints in the New Testament. Christ on more than one occasion used a form of swearing for the confirmation of his doctrine. "Verily, verily, I say unto you," &c. (John 3: 3.) Paul says, "God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit, in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers." "I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you I came not as yet unto Corinth." "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost." "God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ." "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." (Rom. 1: 9. 2 Cor. 9: 23. Rom. 9: 1. Phil. 1: 8. 1 Thes. 2: 16.) These and similar arguments and examples clearly demonstrate that it is lawful for Christians under the new Covenant also to swear religiously.

The Anabaptists bring forward, by way of objection to what has now been advanced, the declaration of Christ, found in Matt. 5: 34–38, where it is said, "I say unto you, Swear not at at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king; neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." They also bring forward, for the same purpose, the following passage from the Epistle of James 5: 12: "Above all things, my brethren, swear not; neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; lest ye come into condemnation." But that these declarations do not forbid all oaths, but only such as are rash and unnecessary, is evident both from a comparison of other passages of the Old and New Testaments, and especially from the design of Christ, who in the first passage referred to, removing the corruptions thrown around the law, and giving its true sense, and at the same time reproving the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, teaches that the third commandment of the Decalogue does not only condemn perjury, but also such oaths as are unnecessary and rash; and among these not only such as are *direct*, in which there is an express mention of the name of God, but also such as are *indirect*, in which, when creatures are named, the name of God is dissembled and understood thereby; which kind of oaths were then common in ordinary conversation. Hypocrites, or those who were in the habit of using these indirect forms of swearing, such as *swearing by the temple, by the altar, by heaven*, &c., excused these oaths, as if they did not profane the name of God when they swore in this way, inasmuch as they did not expressly mention the name of God; and did not suppose that they had perjured themselves, if they violated the oath which they had taken in this indirect form. Christ, now, in the passage referred to, shows that men swear also by the name of God, when heaven and earth are named; because there is no creature, nor any part of the world, upon which God has not stamped some mark of his glory. And when any one swears by heaven and earth in the sight and hearing of his Maker, the religious character of the oath which he takes is not in the creatures by

whom he swears, but God himself alone is called upon to witness what is said, by the mention of those things which are the signs of his glory. Nor does God tenaciously cling to the words which are uttered, but looks more particularly to the mind and intention of him that swears; neither does the honor or dishonor of the name of God consist so much in the syllables or forms of expression used, as in the meaning and sense which they bear, as Christ elsewhere (Matt. 23: 16–23) teaches in express terms, which passage should be compared with the one now under consideration. The same interpretation must be given to the passage quoted from the Epistle of James.

Obj. 1. But Christ says, *Swear not at all;* and James says, *Nor by any other oath.* Therefore Christians are not allowed to swear under any form. Ans. There is here a fallacy of composition; for when Christ says, swear *not at all*, we are not to refer this language to the oath itself, but to the various forms of rash swearing which the Pharisees imagined lawful. It is, therefore, as if he would say, *Swear not falsely or rashly at all, whether it be in a direct or indirect way.* So when the Apostle James says, *Nor by any other oath*, we must understand him also as referring to such oaths as are rash and false, of which kind he furnishes some specimens, and forbids all of a similar character. If this be not the proper interpretation of these passages, Christ himself has violated his own precept which he here lays down, saying, "Let your communination be yea, yea; nay, nay;" for he frequently in his discourses used this most emphatic form of expression, *Verily, verily, I say unto you.* And James would in this case condemn Paul, who *called God for a record upon his soul.* And the Holy Ghost would contradict himself by condemning all oaths by James, and commending them by another Apostle as a remedy useful and necessary to the preservation of society, for the purpose of putting an end to strifes and controversies, from which human life, in this state of frailty and imperfection, cannot be free.

Obj. 2. But such oaths as were permitted, together with the examples which are found in the Scriptures, have respect to public oaths—such as were exacted or given in the name of the public and for the public good. Therefore at least private oaths, or such as pass between private individuals, are entirely prohibited. Ans. 1. We deny the antecedent; because there is not only no such restriction as that which is here maintained, specified in the instances recorded in the Scriptures, where the saints make oath to God, but it is impossible to interpret them in this way, as a careful examination of the passages themselves will prove. 2. There are many oaths recorded in the Scriptures, the private character of which cannot be doubted, such as that of Jacob and Laban, that of Boaz, Abdiah, Abigail, and David. (Gen. 31: 53. Ruth 3: 13, &c.) 3. The same thing may be proven from the design of the oath, which is a confirmation of fidelity and truth amongst men, and the putting an end to strife. These things now have respect to Christians also as private individuals; and hence the oath itself by which we establish truth and fidelity, likewise has respect to them.

IV. What are the things concerning which we are to make oath; or what oaths are lawful, and what unlawful?

Only such oaths are lawful as are evidently not opposed to the word of God, and which are made concerning things *true*, *certainly known*, *lawful*, *possible*, *weighty*, *necessary*, *useful*, *and worthy* of such and so great a confirmation, or of such things as require a confirmation for the glory of God and the safety of our neighbor. It is only in reference to such things, that it is lawful for us to make oath. *Unlawful oaths* are such as are plainly in opposition to the word of God, and made in reference to things which are either *false*, *uncertain*, *unlawful*, *impossible*, *or light and trifling*. Of such things no one should make oath: for he who makes oath in reference to things *which are false*, calls God to witness a lie. He who swears concerning *things uncertain*, makes oath with an evil conscience and with contempt of God, inasmuch as he has the presumption to make God a witness of something of which he has no certain knowledge whether it be true or false. He who swears in this way, has but little concern whether he makes God a witness of what is truth, or falsehood; and yet at the same time he desires that God will either give testimony to a lie, or if he will not be a witness of what is false, that he will punish him making an oath. He who makes oath *concerning things unlawful*, calls upon God to approve and sanction what he has forbidden in his law, and so makes God contradict himself; because he desires that God may punish him if he does what he commands, or if he does not do what God has forbidden. And still further, he who swears in this way, either purposes to act contrary to the command of God, or if he swears sincerely, he calls God to witness a falsehood. He who swears in reference to *things impossible*, is either beside himself, or else trifles with God and men, since he cannot have a sincere purpose to do what he takes an oath to, or he swears hypocritically concerning a lie, viz: that he will do that which he neither will nor can do. Lastly, he who swears with levity, is devoid of all proper reverence to God, and he who swears readily and thoughtlessly, also readily forswears, or takes oath to what is false. The principle cause of an oath should be glory of God, and the public and private safety of our neighbor.

Obj. We should not make oath concerning things that are uncertain. But future contingencies, such as those which men promise themselves that they will perform, are uncertain. Therefore we should not swear in reference to things still future. Ans. As it respects future things, no one does, neither should he swear respecting the event which is beyond our control, but of our present will and purpose to do what is just and lawful, either now or hereafter, and of our obligation, present and future, to do a certain thing, in reference to which every one may and ought to be certain. It was in this way that Abraham, Isaac, Abimelech, David, Jonathan, Boaz, &c., made oath, binding themselves to perform certain duties.

V. Should all oaths be kept?

Oaths which have been properly made concerning things lawful, true, certain, weighty and possible, should necessarily be kept. For if any one once acknowledges and declares that he is justly bound to keep what he made oath to, and calls God to testify thereto, if he afterwards willingly,

or knowingly violates his faith, or breaks his oath—he, in so doing, breaks a lawful bond, and so becomes guilty of perjury. The case, however, is different as it respects oaths which have been made unlawfully, either concerning things unlawful, or by error, or by infirmity, or against the conscience. These are not to be kept; but retracted and amended by repentance and by not persisting in an evil purpose, and so adding sin to sin. "He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not." (Ps. 15: 4.) He who keeps an unlawful oath, sins twice—he sins in the first place by making an oath wickedly, and, in the second place, by keeping that which was done unlawfully, according to the rule, *that which is sworn to wickedly, is worse when kept.* What God forbids, that he will not have us to keep, whether sworn to or not; and what he forbids us to promise, or to swear to, that he the more strictly forbids us to do, by as much as doing surpasses permitting. Those, therefore, who keep such oaths as have been wickedly made, add sin to sin, as Herod did, who put John the Baptist to death upon the pretext of keeping his oath. The same thing may also be said in reference to the vows of Monks who have sworn to that which was idolatrous, or to an unholy single life.

Obj. 1. He who swears that he will do something which he has the power to do, and yet does it not, makes God the witness of a falsehood. He now who makes oath that he will kill a certain person, swears to what he has the power to execute. Therefore, he who takes an oath that he will kill any one, and yet does it not, makes God witness what is false; and as this ought not to be done, he should perform what he has sworn to do. Ans. We reply to the major proposition that it is true, if it has respect to things which are lawful and possible; but it is false if it be understood of things which are unlawful, even though we may have the power to do them. The breaking of an oath which is unlawful, is by no means making God witness a falsehood; inasmuch as it is right and becoming to retract, or to refrain from doing what is evil, as is evident from the example of David who revoked the oath which he had made to destroy Nabal with his family. (1 Sam. 25: 22.)

Obj. 2. The oath of peace which was made with the Gibeonites was contrary to the command of God. (Josh. 9; 15.) Therefore it is lawful to keep oaths which have been taken in reference to things which are unlawful. Ans. 1. We deny that the oath which the princes of the children of Israel made, was unlawful; for they were not forbidden to make peace with any of the nations which God had commanded to be destroyed, if it was desired by any of these nations and they were willing to embrace the Jewish religion, which was the case as it respects the Gibeonites. 2. The objection also contains the fallacy of making that a cause which is none. The Israelites kept this oath, not because they felt themselves bound to do so, having been deceived when they made it, supposing that the Gibeonites had come from a far country; but, 1. That they might avoid offence, so that the name of God might not be reproached or evil spoken of among heathen nations, which might have been the case had they not kept the oath which they had made. 2. Because it was lawful and proper to save those that sought peace, and embraced the Jewish religion, even though there had been no oath taken in the case.

From what has now been said in reference to keeping such oaths as are lawful, we may easily return an answer to the question, *Are such oaths as*

are extorted from persons by tortures, &c., to be kept? They are to be kept if they contain nothing that is unlawful, or if they have the conditions which we have already specified as necessarily required in oaths that are proper, even though they may be disadvantageous and injurious to us. But no one should feel himself bound to keep such oaths as are evidently wrong, nor should we suffer such oaths to be extorted from us by any tortures — we should rather suffer death. Yet if such unlawful oaths are extorted from any one by fear, or by infirmity against the conscience, they bind no one to keep them, and should be retracted; because, what it is wrong for us to do, that it is wicked to swear to; nor must we add sin to sin. But if such oaths as are lawful are extorted from any one; that is, if they be concerning things lawful and possible, even though they be burthensome and disadvantageous to us, yet they should be kept. Should any impossibility, however, afterwards arise, they should in that case not be kept, but be revoked. But if no such impossibility arise they should be kept, that so the greater evil may be avoided; for we are bound by the law of God to choose that evil which is less. If it is just for any one to do what he has promised, being compelled thereto, it is in like manner just to promise by oath to do it. For what it is lawful for any one to do, that it is also lawful for him to promise to do by oath; as, if any one falling into the hands of a robber, should find himself compelled to promise by oath a sum of money, and in addition to this take oath to keep the matter secret, as a ransom for his life, here it is not only lawful, but also proper, (if the thing is at all possible to be done,) to make oath of both to the robber, and to keep the oath, that he may save his life. For what it is lawful to take an oath in regard to, the same is also lawful to be done, and contrariwise.

Obj. No one should take an oath in regard to what would be injurious to the commonwealth, and if such an oath be taken it should not be kept. But to make oath of secrecy to a robber is injurious to the commonwealth. Therefore, such an oath should not be made, and if made, should not be kept. Ans. 1. What is injurious to the commonwealth should not be promised, in case the withholding of such a promise do not endanger our lives, and in case the person placed in such circumstances of danger, be not rather bound to consult his own personal safety, than to come to such a decision. 2. We also deny the minor proposition, because to make such a promise to a robber, and to keep it when made, is rather profitable than injurious to the commonwealth, inasmuch as the life of him who promises secrecy by an oath under such circumstances, is by this means preserved, which is an advantage to the commonwealth; whereas, if he had not by an oath promised secrecy to the robber threatening him with death, he might have been slain, and so have been lost both to the commonwealth and himself. Hence, to promise secrecy by an oath to a robber should rather be preferred, inasmuch as this is a less evil to the state, than that a member thereof should be slain.

THIRTY-EIGHTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 103. What doth God require in the fourth command?

Answer. First, that the ministry of the gospel and the schools be maintained; and that I, especially on the Sabbath, that is, on the day of rest, diligently frequent the Church of God, to hear his word, to use the sacraments, publicly to call upon the Lord, and contribute to the relief of the poor, as becomes a Christian. Secondly, that all the days of my life I cease from my evil works, and yield myself to the Lord, to work by his Holy Spirit in me, and thus begin in this life the eternal sabbath.

EXPOSITION.

The Fourth Commandment consists of two parts — *a commandment and a reason of the commandment.* The commandment is, *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy; in it thou shalt do no manner of work*, &c. Of this, again, there are two parts — the *one* moral and perpetual, as that the Sabbath be kept holy; the *other* ceremonial and temporary, as that the seventh day be kept holy.

That the first part is moral and perpetual, is evident from the end and the causes of the commandment, which are perpetual in their character. The *end* or design of the commandment is the maintenance of the public worship of God in the church; or the perpetual preservation, and use of the ecclesiastical ministry. God designs that there should at all times be a public ministry of the church, and that there should be assemblies of the faithful to which his doctrine may be preached. The objects which God designs by this means to accomplish, are, 1. That he may be publicly praised and worshipped in the world. 2. That the piety and faith of the elect may be stirred up and confirmed by these public services. 3. That men may by this means mutually strengthen each other in the faith of the gospel, and provoke one another to love and good works. 4. That agreement in the doctrine of the church and in the worship of God may be preserved and perpetuated. 5. That the church may be visible in the world, and be distinguished from the rest of mankind. Inasmuch now as *these reasons* do not have respect to any particular time, but to all times and conditions of the church and world, it follows that God will always have the ministry of the church preserved and the use thereof respected, so that the moral part of this commandment binds all men from the beginning to the end of the world, to observe some Sabbath, or to devote a certain portion of their time to sermons, public prayers, and the administration of the sacraments.

That the other part of the commandment is ceremonial, and not perpetual, is evident from the fact that the Sabbath of the seventh day was, in the promulgation of the law, instituted of God for the observance of the Mosaic worship, and given to the Jews as a sacrament or a type of the sanctification of the church by the Messiah, who was to come, as it is said, "Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep, for it is a sign between me and you, throughout your generations, that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." "I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify them." (Ex. 31: 13. Ez. 20: 12.) Hence the Sabbath, in as far as it has respect to the seventh day, was, together with other ceremonies and types,

fulfilled and abolished by the coming of the Messiah. So much briefly concerning the commandment itself.

The reason of the commandment is contained in these words: *For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.* The reason which is here given is drawn from the example of God's resting on the seventh day from the work of creation which he had accomplished in six days. It has respect, therefore, properly to the circumstance of the seventh day, or to that part of the commandment which is ceremonial. Yet *the imitating* of that rest to which God invites us, is not only ceremonial, and so having regard to the Jews, but also moral or spiritual, being signified by the ceremonial, in which respect it belongs to all men. That the commandment itself, together with the reason that is annexed to it, may be better understood, we shall now explain very briefly the words of both; after which we shall explain those subjects which fall naturally under this part of the Catechism.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. What and how mani-fold the Sabbath is will hereafter be explained. The language which is here used is most emphatic. God speaks as if the thing concerning which he gives a command were of the greatest importance. *Remember that thou keep holy;* as if he would say, thou shalt observe the Sabbath day with great care and conscientiousness. God commands elsewhere that he who would violate the Sabbath should be put to death.

The reasons on account of which God commands such a careful observance of the Sabbath are, 1. Because a violation of the Sabbath is a violation of the whole worship of God. A neglect of the ministry of the church leads most easily and directly to a neglect and corruption of the doctrine and worship of God. 2. God, in exacting such a rigid and careful observance of the Sabbath, which was typical, would indicate thereby the greatness and necessity of the thing signified, which was the spiritual Sabbath. 3. Because God will have the external Sabbath to contribute towards beginning and perfecting in us that rest which is spiritual.

Keep holy. To keep holy the Sabbath, is not to spend the day in slothfulness and idleness; but to avoid sin, and to perform such works as are holy. God is said to sanctify the Sabbath differently from what men do. God is said to sanctify the Sabbath, because he institutes it for divine worship. Men are said to sanctify it, when they devote it to the purpose for which God instituted it.

Six days shalt thou labor. God allots six days for labor, the seventh he claims for divine worship; not that he would teach that the worship of God and meditation upon divine things is to be omitted on all other days beside the Sabbath, but, 1. That there might not only be a private worship of God on the Sabbath as at other times, but that public worship might also be observed in the church. 2. That all those other works which men ordinarily perform on the other days of the week, might on the Sabbath give place to the private and public worship of God.

Thou shalt do no manner of work. When God forbids us to work on the Sabbath day, he does not forbid every kind of work, but only such works as are *servile* — such as hinder the worship of God, and the design and use of the ministry of the church. That this is the true sense of this command is evident from what is expressly said in other portions of the

Scripture. "Ye shall do no *servile* work therein." (Lev. 23: 25.) It is, therefore, only *servile* works which are prohibited by this commandment. Hence, Christ in the twelfth chapter of Matthew vindicates his disciples from the charge of breaking the Sabbath day, when they plucked the ears of corn as they passed through the fields and ate, being an hungered; and also himself healed on the Sabbath day the man who had a withered hand; and in another place (Luke 14: 5,) says, that if an ox or an ass fall into a pit, there is no sin in drawing them out on the Sabbath day. Maccabeus also carried on war on the Sabbath day. And in the first book of Mac. 2: 40, 41, there are reasons given in justification of this and similar works on the Sabbath day. "If we all do as our brethren have done and fight not for our lives and laws against the heathen, they will now quickly root us out of the earth. At that time, therefore, they decreed, saying, Whosoever shall come to make battle with us on the Sabbath day, we will fight against him, neither will we die all, as our brethren that were murdered in secret places." So Christ defended his disciples and himself in the place already referred to, citing a passage out of the book of Hosea: "If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." Again: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." (Matt. 12: 7. Mark 2: 27.) Christ here teaches that ceremonial works must yield to such as are moral, so that ceremonies should rather be omitted than works of love, which our own necessity or that of our neighbor requires. Hence, he says: "Have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath day the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are blameless; but I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple." "Ye on the Sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man on the Sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day." (Matt. 12: 5. John 7: 22, 23.) These declarations teach, that such works as do not hinder or interfere with the proper use of the Sabbath, but which, on the other hand, rather carry out its true intention and so establish it, as all those works do which so pertain to the worship of God or religious ceremonies, or to the duty of love towards our neighbor, or to the saving of our own, or the life of another, as that necessity will not allow them to be deferred to another time, do not violate the Sabbath, but are especially required in order that we may properly observe it.

Neither thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter. God will have our children and families to cease from labor on the Sabbath, for two reasons: 1. Chiefly, that they may be instructed and trained up by their parents in the worship of God, and may be admitted to the privileges of the church; for God will have them also to be members of his church. 2. Because he designs that love and benevolence towards our neighbor should especially be exercised, and shown on the Sabbath day.

Nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. God commands that even the strangers who might be found among the Israelites should not work on the Sabbath day; and this he does upon the ground, that if they were converted to the true religion, they were members of the church; and if they were unbelievers, he commands it, not on their own account, but on account of the Israelites, lest by their example they should give offence to the church; or lest their liberty might be an occasion to the Jews to accomplish

through them the things which they themselves were not permitted to do on the Sabbath day, and in this way practise deception in relation to the law of God.

We may here return an answer to the three following questions: 1. Were other nations also bound to observe the ceremonies which were instituted particularly for the Jews, if any of them lived amongst the Israelites? 2. Was it possible or proper to constrain those who were aliens from the church to embrace the Jewish religion? 3. Were the sacraments, among which the Sabbath was enumerated, to be given in common to the unbelievers and the church? To the *first* and *second* of these questions we reply, that the strangers who lived among the Jews were not bound or compelled to conform to all the ceremonies, nor to the Jewish religion itself, but only to such external discipline as was necessary for the purpose of avoiding offence to the church in which they lived. A magistrate ought to be a defender of order and discipline among his subjects, as it respects both tables of the Decalogue, and to guard against and prohibit open idolatry and wickedness; and ought also to avoid, as far as it is possible, all offences and occasions to sin that may be given to his subjects by foreigners and sojourners. Furthermore, there was a peculiar reason calling for a particular observance of the Sabbath, inasmuch as it was not then for the first time given to the Israelites when God gave them the law by Moses, but had been enjoined upon all men from the very beginning of the world by God himself, although this precept had been lost sight of by other nations; so much so, that is was regarded as the greatest reproach which they could cast upon the Jews to term them *Sabbatarians*, which appellation was given to them on account of the rigid and exact observance which they paid to the Sabbath.

We reply to the *third* question proposed, that the Sabbath was no sacrament to unbelievers, although they ceased from labor as well as those who worshipped God according to the Jewish faith; because the promise that Jehovah would be their sanctifier did not pertain to them; nor were they required to obstain from their ordinary labor, for an acknowledgment and confession of this promise, but merely for the sake of avoiding offence, and cutting off all occasion to sin, which might be given to the people of God by their laboring on the Sabbath day.

Nor thy cattle. This furnishes still stronger proof that the Sabbath was no sacrament for such as did not believe; because even the cattle were required to have rest. This rest, however, as far as it has respect to cattle, is neither the worship of God, nor is it a sacrament; but it was commanded in respect to men: 1. That every occasion for working on the Sabbath day might be cut off from men, by forbidding them to have their cattle at work on that day. 2. That in sparing their dumb beasts, they might also learn how God would have them to possess and exercise kindness and equity towards their fellow-men.

For in six days the Lord made. The reason which is added to this commandment is drawn from the example of God's resting from the work of creation, and has respect to the ceremonial part of the commandment concerning the seventh day, as we have before shown.

And rested on the seventh day. This means that God ceased to create any new works, the world being now perfect, and such as God desired it to be. God set apart this day to divine worship: 1. That the rest of

the seventh day might be a monument of the creation which he had accomplished, and of the constant care, preservation, and government which he has exercised over the works of his hands from that day, for his own glory and for the salvation of his people; and so might excite us to a consideration of these his works, and to praise and glorify his name for his benefits to mankind, on whose account God created and preserves all things. 2. That by the example of himself resting on the seventh day, he might exhort men, as by a most effectual and constraining argument, to imitate him, and so abstain, on the seventh day, from the labors to which they were accustomed during the other six days of the week. This imitation of God resting on the seventh day is twofold: ceremonial and moral, as has been shown. So our works also, from which we are required to abstain on the Sabbath, are of two kinds. Some are indeed commanded by God, but are, nevertheless, not to be done when their performance would interfere with or hinder the worship of God. The labors and duties which belong to the peculiar callings of men are of this sort. Others, again, are prohibited by God, as sins. These works are all prohibited on the Sabbath; but by a difference which is three-fold: 1. Works are forbidden in respect to something, viz., in as far as they hinder the ministry of the church, or give offence: sins are positively forbidden. 2. Works are required to be omitted only on the Sabbath day: sins at all times. 3. Resting from labor is a type of resting or ceasing from sin, which is the thing signified.

OF THE SABBATH.

Having now given a brief explanation of the words of the commandment, that the doctrine of the Sabbath and its true sanctification may be the better understood, we must still further consider:

I. *What and how mani-fold is the Sabbath?*
II. *In what respect does it belong to us?*
III. *Why was it instituted?*
IV. *How is it kept holy, and how profaned?*

I. What and how mani-fold is the Sabbath?

The word Sabbath (in the Hebrew *schabbat*, *schebbet*, and *shabbathon*,) means quietness, rest, or ceasing from labor. God so called the day which he set apart to his own public worship: 1. Because he himself rested on this day, or ceased to create any new works, although he did not cease to preserve that which he had created. 2. Because the Sabbath is an image or type of the spiritual rest from sin which the faithful shall enjoy in the life to come. 3. Because we also ought on this day to cease from all servile work, that God may perform in us his works. 4. Because our families and cattle ought also to rest. The Sabbath is, therefore a time appointed for rest from external works, whether morally or ceremonially forbidden: that is, from sins, and from the labors of our callings which have respect to this life; and is also a time set apart for the performance of those things which belong to the worship of God.

The Sabbath may be viewed in a two-fold aspect: either as moral and internal, or as ceremonial and external. *The moral and internal, or spiritual Sabbath*, includes the study of the knowledge of God and of

his works, with a careful shunning of sin, and worshipping God by confession and obedience. Or we may define it more briefly as a ceasing from sin, and a giving of ourselves to God to do such works as he requires from us. The Sabbath, although it ought to be perpetual in those who are converted, is nevertheless only begun in this life, and is called the Sabbath both because it is even now a true rest from the labors and miseries of this life, with a consecration of ourselves to the service of God, and also because it was formerly signified by the ceremonial Sabbath. "I gave them my Sabbaths to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." (Ez. 20: 12.) But in the life to come this Sabbath will be enjoyed perfectly and forever, and will consist in perpetually praising and glorifying God, being entirely freed and released from the cares and labors with which we are now perplexed and occupied. "And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." (Is. 66: 23.)

The ceremonial or external Sabbath is a certain time set apart in the church for the preaching of the word and for the administration of the sacraments, or for the public worship of God, during which time there is a suspension or abstinence from all other works. This external Sabbath possesses likewise a two-fold character, being immediate and mediate. The *former*, or immediate Sabbath, was that which was instituted immediately by God himself, and enjoined upon the church under the Old Testament dispensation. This Sabbath was again viewed in different aspects, as:

1. *The Sabbath of days.* This was every seventh day of the week, which was more particularly and properly called the Sabbath, on account of God's resting from the work of the creation of the world, and on account of the rest which the people of God were required to observe on that day. Hence, the Hebrews were accustomed to call the whole seven days, or week, the Sabbath, or Sabbaths, by a synecdoche. (Matt. 28: 1.) So it was also in regard to other festival days, as the feast of the Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, Trumpets and Fasts, &c.; because the Jews upon these days were required to abtain from labor, and rest, as much so as on the seventh day.

2. *The Sabbath of months* were the new moons.

3. *The Sabbath of years* was every seventh year, in which the Jews were required to intermit the tillage of their fields, during which time they neither sowed their fields, nor pruned their vineyards. Here also, as in the former instance, the whole seven years were by a synecdoche called Sabbaths. (Lev. 25: 4; 26: 35; 25: 8.)

The mediate external Sabbath is that which God has instituted through the church under the New Testament dispensation, which belongs to the first day of the week, which is called Sunday, or, more properly, the Lord's day, which the Christian church has observed in the place of the seventh day from the time of the Apostles, in view of the resurrection of Christ, as appears from what the Apostle John says: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." (Rev. 1: 10.)

Or, to express it more briefly, we may say that the ceremonial Sabbath is two-fold: the one belonging to the Old, the other to the New Testament. The *old* was restricted to the seventh day: its observance was necessary, and constituted the worship of God. The *new* depends upon the

decision and appointment of the church, which for certain reasons has made choice of the first day of the week, which is to be observed for the sake of order, and not from any idea of necessity, as if this and no other were to be observed by the church, concerning which we shall presently speak.

A table respecting the distinction of the Sabbath.

- The Sabbath, or an abstinence from work, is either
  - 1. Internal, moral, and spiritual, as rest from sin.
  - 2. External and ceremonial, instituted by God either
    - 1. Immediately in the Old Testament, as
      - The Sabbath
        - 1. Of days, as the
          - Seventh day.
          - Feast days, as the Passover, Pentecost, &c.
        - 1. Of months, as the new moons.
        - 3. Of years, as every seventh year.
    - 2. Mediately through the church in the New Testament, as the Lord's day.

II. In how far does the Sabbath belong to us?

The Sabbath of the seventh day was appointed of God from the very beginning of the world, to declare that men, after his example, should rest from their labors, and especially from sin. This commandment was subsequently repeated in the law as given by Moses, at which time the ceremony which had respect to the observance of the seventh day, as a day of rest was made a sacrament of sanctification, by which God declared that he would be the sanctifier of his church; or, that he would pardon the sins of such as would believe, and receive them into favor on account of the Messiah promised to the fathers, and who would at the appointed time make his appearance in the world. The reason why the ceremonial Sabbath of the seventh day is now abolished, is because it was typical, signifying the benefits of the Messiah, and admonishing the people of God of their duty. It was for the same reason that all the other sacraments, sacrifices and ceremonies, instituted before and after the giving of the law, were abolished by the coming of Christ, who fulfilled all that was signified by these things. But although the ceremonial Sabbath has been abolished in the New Testament, yet the moral still continues, and pertains to us as well as to others; for there is now just as much necessity for a certain time to be set apart in the Christian church for the preaching of God's word, and for the public administration of the sacraments, as there was formerly in the Jewish church. Yet we must not suppose that we are restricted or tied down either to Saturday, Wednesday, or any other day. The apostolic church, to distinguish itself from the Jewish synagogue, chose, in the exercise of the liberty conferred upon it by Christ, the first day of the week in the place of the seventh, because on that day the resurrection of Christ took place, by which the internal and spiritual Sabbath is begun in us. In a word, we are bound to the sabbath, whether considered morally or ceremonially, as it respects that which is general, but not

as it respects that which is particular; or, in other words, there is a necessity that we should have a certain day on which the church should be instructed and the sacraments administered; yet we are not bound or tied down to any particular day.

The Jews present the following objections against the abrogation of the ceremonial Sabbath: 1. The Decalogue is a perpetual law. The commandment respecting the Sabbath is a part of the Decalogue. Therefore it is a perpetual law, and should not be abolished. Ans. The Decalogue is a perpetual law in as far as it is moral; but those things which were added to it for the sake of signification, or which may be viewed as limitations of the moral precepts of the Decalogue, were to be preserved merely to the coming of the Messiah.

Obj. 2. The commandments of the Decalogue pertain to all men. This commandment is one of the precepts of the Decalogue. Therefore it pertains to all men, and so ought not to be abolished. Ans. We grant the argument, in as far as it respects that which is moral. But this commandment is in part ceremonial, and in this respect does not pertain to us, although that which is general does. The reasons of this are evident: 1. Paul says, "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day." (Col. 2: 16.) 2. The Apostles themselves changed the Sabbath of the seventh day. 3. From the design of the law. It was a type of things that were to be fulfilled by Christ, viz., of sanctification, &c. Every type now must give place to its antitype, or to that which is signified by it. Again: the Jewish nation was by this means separated from the other nations of the earth, which separation was removed or taken away by Christ.

Obj. 3. The Lord says of the Sabbath, "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: and an everlasting covenant." (Ex. 31: 16, 17.) Therefore the Sabbath of the seventh day is perpetual, and never to be abolished. Ans. 1. The ceremonial Sabbath was perpetual until the coming of Christ, who put an end to ceremonies by fulfilling them. 2. The Sabbath is to continue forever as it respects the thing which it signified, which is a ceasing from sin and a rest in God. In this sense all the types of the Old Testament are perpetual, even the kingdom of David itself; which was, nevertheless, overthrown before the coming of Christ. We may here refer the reader to what has already been said respecting the abrogation of the law, under the third general division of the Law, particularly the first and second objections.

Obj. 4. The laws which were given before the time of Moses were unchangeable. The precept respecting the setting apart of the seventh day as the Sabbath, was given before the time of Moses. Therefore it is unchangeable, even though we may grant that the Mosaic ceremonies were to be changed. Ans. The major proposition is particular, being true only as it respects those laws which are moral, and not concerning those which are ceremonial. For even the ceremonies which were instituted by God before the time of Moses, which were types of the benefits which the Messiah was to procure, have been abolished by the coming of Christ; as is true of circumcision, given to Abraham, and of the sacrifices which our first parents were commanded to offer.

Obj. 5. The laws which God gave before the fall are binding upon all men, and were not types of the benefits of the Messiah, inasmuch

as the promise respecting the Messiah was not then given, and there was one and the same condition pertaining to the whole human race. But God had already set apart the seventh day as a day of rest, before the fall of our first parents. Therefore this commandment is universal and perpetual. Ans. The major proposition is true as it respects the moral law, some natural conceptions and principles of which were impressed upon the mind of man in his creation; but not as touching the observance of the seventh day, which after the fall was made in the law of Moses a type of the benefits of the Messiah; and was, therefore, as other ceremonies which were then instituted, or instituted at an earlier period, made changeable by the coming of Christ; for God will not permit the types and shadows of certain things to remain any longer in force, when the things which they signify become real. Hence, although we grant that the exercises of divine worship were to have been observed upon the seventh day, according to the command of the Decalogue, as well as if men never had sinned, as now since they have sinned; yet after God had placed the observance of this particular day among those things which were shadows of the benefits of the Messiah which was to come, by the new law which was given to Moses, it became changeable with other ceremonies.

Obj. 6. If the cause of any law be perpetual, the law itself must be perpetual. The remembrance and celebration of the creation of all things, together with meditation upon the works of God, is a perpetual cause, calling for the observance of the seventh day as the sabbath. Therefore the law respecting the observence of the seventh day as the sabbath is unchangeable, even after the coming of Christ. Ans. We must here again make a distinction in replying to the major proposition: That law is indeed unchangeable by reason of an immutable cause, provided that cause or end necessarily and constantly require this law as an effect or as a means; but not if at other times the same end may be more successfully reached by other means, or in case the law-giver may accomplish it as well by another law. But we may meditate upon the works of God and magnify his power and goodness as they appear in them upon any other day, as well as upon the seventh day. Therefore this cause does not demand a perpetual law respecting the observance of the seventh day as the sabbath.

The Anabaptists bring as an objection against the observance of the first day of the week, or the Lord's day, those passages of Scripture which forbid any distinction being made between days under the New Testament. "Let no man judge you in respect to an holy-day." "Ye observe, days and months, and times, and years." "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it," &c. (Col. 2: 16. Gal. 4: 10. Rom. 14: 6.) Therefore, say they, the observance of the first day is as much condemned as that of the seventh. We reply to the antecedent; That the Scriptures do not simply, or absolutely forbid Christians to make a distinction between days, but only when it is done with an idea of establishing ceremonial worship, or of necessity. But it is not in this way that the church observes the Lord's day, or the first day of the week. The observance of the first day of the week on the part of Christians differs in two respects from the observance of the Jewish sabbath. 1. It was not lawful for the Jews, on account of the express command of God, to alter or change the sabbath of the seventh day, as being a part of the ceremonial worship. But the

Christian church, in the exercise of her own liberty, sets apart the first, or any other day to the ministry, without connecting with it any opinion of necessity, or worship. 2. The ancient Sabbath was a type of things in the Old Testament which were to be fulfilled by Christ. But in the New Testament that signification has ceased, whilst respect is had merely to order and propriety, without which the ministry of the church would either be no ministry, or at least not a properly constituted one.

III. For what was the Sabbath instituted?

The ultimate ends for which the Sabbath was instituted are chiefly these:

1. The public worship of God in the church.

2. The preservation of the ecclesiastical ministry, which is an office divinely instituted to give instruction to the church concerning God and his will, out of the holy Scriptures, delivered by the prophets and Apostles, and to administer the sacraments according to divine appointment. This is a most important end, on account of which the Sabbath was instituted, inasmuch as the public and ordinary preaching of the gospel, in connection with the offering up of prayer, thanksgiving and the use of divine rites, are public exercises, exciting and cherishing faith and repentance in the elect.

3. That it might be in the Old Testament a type signifying the spiritual and eternal sabbath. "I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." (Ez. 20: 12.)

4. That the circumstance of the seventh day might remind and admonish men of the creation of the world, and of the duty of meditating upon the works which God made in six days.

5. That works of charity, liberality and kindness might especially be performed towards our neighbor on this day.

6. For the sake of bodily rest both to man and beasts: to beasts for the sake of man.

7. That men might by their example provoke one another to piety and the worship of God. "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." (Ps. 22: 22.)

8. That the church might by this means be visible in the world, and be distinguished from idolators and blasphemers, so that those who are yet out of the church may know to what communion they ought to attach themselves. The Sabbath now was a mark under the Old Testament by which the people Israel were distinguished and separated from other nations.

IV. How is the Sabbath kept holy, and how profaned, or what are the works commanded and forbidden on the sabbath.

The sanctification of the Sabbath consists in performing such holy works as God has commanded to be done on this day. So on the other hand, the sabbath is profaned either when holy works are omitted, or when such works are performed as hinder the ministry of the church, and as are contrary to the things which belong to the proper sanctification of the sabbath.

The works by which the Sabbath is sanctified, and those which are contrary thereto, being the ones by which it is profaned, are chiefly these:

I. RIGHTLY TO TEACH *and instruct the church concerning God and his will.* The teaching which is here enjoined is different from that required by the third commandment; for there the propagation of the doctrine of the church is made the duty of every one privately; whilst here the office of teaching is committed to certain persons, who, being divinely furnished with the gifts necessary for this calling, are lawfully called by the church, to act in the capacity of teachers. This commandment now requires all those who are called to teach in the church, faithfully to deliver and expound sound doctrine, both publicly to those who assemble together for the purpose of receiving instruction, and to every one privately as occasion and necessity may admit and require, all of which is done for public edification and for the salvation of each one individually. The following and similar passages of Scripture may here be appropriately cited, Liv. 10: 11. Acts 13: 15; 17: 2. 2 Tim. 4: 2, &c.

The opposite of this includes, 1. An omission, or neglect of the duty of teaching, whether privately or publicly, concerning which God complains, through the prophet, when he says: "Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks." (Is. 56: 10. Ez. 34: 2.)

II. TO ADMINISTER THE SACRAMENTS *according to divine appointment.* This should likewise be performed by the ministers of the church lawfully called for the purpose of attending to this duty. Yet we must not suppose that the administration of the sacraments is any more restricted and tied down to certain days and times, than the preaching of the word. All that is necessary is that the administration should be public, that it should be done by the ministers of the church who bear a public character, and represent God speaking with men. So circumcision was administered on any day, which might be the eighth day after the birth of the child, whether it was the Sabbath or not. So baptism may be administered at any time; *though the administration of the sacraments should take place chiefly on the sabbath day.* "When ye come together in one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper." "Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another." "And they continued steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayers." (1 Cor. 11: 20, 33. Acts 2: 42.)

To the lawful administration of the sacraments is opposed an *omission of this duty*, or a *neglect to* exhort the church to a proper use of the sacraments. The same thing is also true in regard to such an *administration of the sacraments as is unlawful*, which is the case whenever any thing is taken away from, or added to those ordinances, which have been divinely instituted, or when there is any change made in them; or when those are excluded from the sacraments who ought to be admitted, and others are admitted who ought to be excluded; or when the people are not properly instructed in relation to their lawful use.

III. DILIGENTLY TO LEARN THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH, which is to frequent the public gatherings of the saints for the purpose of hearing and learning the doctrine delivered from heaven, and having heard it, to meditate seriously upon it and enquire into its truth: but more especially to devote those days which have been set apart to the ministry and service of God, in reading, in meditating and discoursing upon divine things. These things are evident and follow naturally from their correlatives; for

if God will have those whose duty it shall be diligently to teach on the sabbath day, he also requires men diligently to hear and learn this doctrine which he reveals unto them through his servants, and to accompany this hearing with *private meditation*, as in the case of the Bereans of whom it said; "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether these things were so." (Acts 17: 11.) Such a study of the doctrine of the church is, however, especially necessary for those who either now, or hereafter may be called to minister to the church in the capacity of teachers. Hence it is that the Apostle exhorts Timothy to give attendance to reading, to exhortation and doctrine. (1 Tim. 4: 13.)

The opposite of such a diligent study of the doctrine of the church, shows itself in its lowest and most common form, 1. *In a contempt and neglect of this doctrine*, which may be said to take place whenever men absent themselves from the public assemblies of the church without any just hindrance, or excuse, and attend to such things on the Sabbath day as could easily be deferred; or when they appear in the church among the worshippers of God, without giving a proper hearing or attention to the sermons which are delivered; or when they do not meditate upon and enquire into the truth of the doctrine of God's word.

2. *A neglect to obtain a knowledge* of the teachings of the church from those who are called of God to the study of this doctrine, or who may hereafter devote themselves to the work of spreading a knowledge of God and his will, and who may have greater opportunity and ability of imparting a knowledge of this doctrine than others—"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required." (Luke 12: 48.)

3. *Curiosity*, which is a desire to know or hear those things which God has not revealed, which are unnecessary and new. "For men to search their own glory is not glory." "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid knowing that they do gender strife." "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." (Prov. 25: 27. 2 Tim. 2: 23; 4: 3. See also 1 Tim. 4: 7. Tit. 3: 9.)

IV. TO USE THE SACRAMENTS ACCORDING TO DIVINE APPOINTMENT. "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them," &c. (Acts 20: 7.) So God commanded that the Passover should be observed in a solemn assembly of the people, and assigned certain sacrifices to the Sabbath and other holy days. And as God will have his word publicly preached and heard, so he will also have the true and lawful use of the sacraments observed and seen in the public assemblies of the church, inasmuch as both are marks by which the true church may be known and distinguished from all other religions and people. The sacraments, also, just as the word, constitute a part of the public worship of God in the church, and are means to stir up and cherish faith and godliness in the faithful. Hence the use of the sacraments is most intimately connected with a proper observance and sanctification of the Sabbath.

To such a lawful use of the sacraments there is opposed,

1. *A neglect and contempt* of the sacraments.

2. *A profanation* of the sacraments; as when they are observed in a manner different from what God has commanded, or by those for whom they were not instituted.

3. *A superstitious use* of the sacraments; as when salvation and the grace of God are tied to the observance of the rites, or when they are directed to such ends as God has not appointed. "The uncircumcised man-child whose flesh of his fore-skin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people." "He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, is as if he cut off a dog's neck," &c. (Gen. 17: 14. Is. 66: 3.)

V. A PUBLIC CALLING UPON GOD, in which we unite our own confession, thanksgiving and prayer with the church; for God will not only be invoked by every one privately, but also publicly by the whole church, for his own glory and our comfort. It is for this reason that Christ has added a special promise to such prayers as are offered up publicly. "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18: 19, 20.) It is not public prayer, but ostentation and hypocrisy, the counterfeit of true piety, that Christ condemns, when he says, "When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." (Matt. 6: 6.) That this is the true sense of these words is evident from what immediately precedes, where Christ says, "When thou prayest thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the street," &c. The difference between the invocation which is here enjoined and that which is enjoined in the third commandment consists in this, that this is public, having respect to the whole church, whilst that is private, having respect to each one individually.

The extremes of this virtue are, 1. *A neglect or want of attention* to the prayers of the church.

2. *A hypocritical offering* of prayer with the church, when there is no heart-felt devotion.

3. *A mere repetition of prayers*, without any edification to the church. "For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified." (1 Cor. 14: 17.)

VI. CHARITY AND LIBERALITY TO THE POOR, which consists in giving alms, and performing works of love to the needy, to sanctify the Sabbath in this way by shewing our obedience to the doctrine of Christ. We may here appropriately cite the discourse of Christ concerning the Sabbath, in which he asked the Jews, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath day, or to do evil." (Mark 3: 4.) And although God will have us to observe this Sabbath during our whole life, yet he desires that we give an example and evidence of it especially at such times as are allotted for teaching and studying his word. For if any one shows no disposition to obey God when the doctrine of God's word sounds in his ears, and when, free from other cares, God commands us to give ourselves to the contemplation of godliness and repentance, he declares by such indifference that he will much less do it at other times. Hence it has always been the practice of the church to bestow alms upon the Sabbath day, and to perform acts of charity towards those who need our help and sympathy. "Send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto the Lord." (Neh. 8: 10.)

The opposite of this virtue shows itself in a neglect and contempt of the poor, and in giving our alms for the sake of being seen of men, which Christ condemns.

VII. The honor of the ecclesiastical ministry, which embraces many particulars, among which we may mention, 1. *Reverence*, which consists in an acknowledgment of the divine order and will in the institution and preservation of the ministry, in gathering the church by means of it, and in the declaration of this our judgment concerning the ministry both in word and deed. "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us." (1 Cor. 4: 1. 2 Cor. 5: 20.)

2. *Love*, by which we willingly frequent the gatherings of the church, hear and study the doctrine of Christ, and desire and pray for every needful blessing to rest upon the faithful ministers of the church, not merely in view of the duty of love which we owe to them, but also on account of the office which they discharge. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even thirsteth for the courts of the Lord." "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of the Lord." (Ps. 84: 1, 2; 122: 1.)

3. *Obedience* in those things which belong to the ministry. "Obey them that have the rule over you." (Heb. 12: 17.) The works of love to God and our neighbor, including the entire life of the christian, which is the spiritual Sabbath, fall properly under this head; for to observe the spiritual Sabbath is nothing else than to obey the voice of God, speaking to us through the ministry of the church, in regulating and directing the life.

4. *Gratitude*, which includes such duties as pertain to the preservation of the ministry and of ministers; for if God designs that there should be a ministry, he also designs that it should be perpetuated, and that every one contribute to the extent of his ability to the accomplishment of this object. We may here appropriately cite the laws of Moses respecting the first-born, the first-fruits, tithes and many other offerings which were given to the priests and Levites, by way of compensation, that so they might give themselves wholly to their work without any distraction. And although the circumstances of these laws have been abolished, yet the general principle which lies at the bottom will continue forever; because God will have the ministry of the church maintained to the end of the world. "Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth." "Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" &c. (Deut. 12: 19. 1 Cor. 9: 7. See also Gal. 6: 6. 1 Tim. 5: 17. Matt. 10: 14.) *The maintenance of schools* may be embraced under this part of the honor which is due to the ministry; for unless the arts and sciences be taught, men can neither become properly qualified to teach, nor can the purity of doctrine be preserved and defended against the assaults of heretics.

5. *Moderation and allowance* in bearing such infirmities and imperfections of ministers as do not greatly and evidently corrupt and impede the objects of the ministry, and injure the church by giving offence. "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." (1 Tim. 5: 19.)

The opposite of all this is embraced *in a contempt of the ministry* of the church, which takes place whenever this ministry is abolished, or is committed to persons unworthy of such a trust, or when it is not acknowledged as the means which God will employ for gathering the church; the same thing is likewise true when the ministers of the church are treated with contempt and reproach, when their teachings are heard but not practiced in the life, when acts of charity are overlooked, and when it is made ineffectual by things of a trifling and wicked character. So there is a contempt of the ministry of the church when a sufficient and necessary support is withheld, or when it is not protected and defended, and when other duties of gratitude are not performed towards the ministers of Christ, when schools are not maintained and supported, when learning is neglected, and when, instead of making proper allowance for such defects of ministers as result from our natural weakness and imperfection, they are treated with contempt and derision. It is also in opposition to the use of the ministry, and at the same time a contempt thereof, whenever any one by his advice, example, or other means, prevents his own family or others from attending upon the public instructions of the sanctuary.

CONCERNING THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH.

Having now seen that this fourth commandment sanctions and authorises the public worship of God, and so by consequence the ministry of the church, together with the honor and use connected with it, it is necessary that we should here make some remarks in reference to the ministry; and in so doing we shall inquire,

I. *What is the ministry of the church?*
II. *For what end has it been instituted?*
III. *What are the grades of ministers?*
IV. *What are the duties devolving upon the ministers of the church?*
V. *To whom should the ministry be committed?*

I. What is the Ministry of the church?

The ecclesiastical ministry is that office which God has instituted in his church to which he has committed the preaching of his word, and the administration of the sacraments according to divine appointment.

The ministry of the church includes, therefore, these two things—the preaching of the word and the administration of the sacraments.

II. For what has the Ministry of the church been instituted?

The reasons for which God instituted the ministry of the church are,

1. *The glory of God.* God will not only be praised and called upon by men privately, but also by the public voice of the whole church. "Bless ye God in the congregations." (Ps. 68: 26.)

2. That it may be a means or instrumentality by which men may be converted to God. "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints," &c.

3. That God might in this way accommodate himself to our weakness and infirmity in teaching men by men.

4. That men might provoke one another by their example to godliness, and to the praise and worship of God." "I will declare thy name unto my brethren." (Ps. 22: 22.)

5. That God may thus show his mercy, in that he commits to the hands of men that great work, the ministry of reconciliation, which the Son of God himself discharged.

6. That the church may be visible in the world, that so the elect may know to what they ought to attach themselves, and that the reprobate may be rendered perfectly inexcusable in that they despise and endeavor to make ineffectual the voice and call which God addresses in their hearing. "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." (Rom. 10: 18. See also 2 Cor. 2: 14, 15, 16.)

III. What are the grades or degrees of Ministers?

Some ministers are called *immediately* by God, whilst others again are called *mediately* by the church. Prophets and Apostles have been called in the way first mentioned. *Prophets* were ministers called immediately by God for the purpose of teaching and expounding the doctrine of Moses, and the promises respecting the Messiah; to reprove and do away with the corruptions and errors in the church and state, and to utter predictions respecting the church and the world, having the testimony and assurance that they could not err in the doctrines which they delivered in the name of God. *Apostles* were ministers called immediately by Christ to publish the doctrine respecting the Messiah already come in the flesh, and to spread it throughout the whole world, having a similar testimony from God that they could not err in the doctrine. Ministers called *mediately* are, 1. *Evangelists*, who were assistants to the Apostles, and were sent by them to teach and establish various churches. 2. *Bishops*, or pastors, are ministers called by the church to teach the word of God and to administer the sacraments in particular churches. 3. *Doctors*, or teachers, are ministers called by the church to teach in certain churches. 4. *Governors* are ministers chosen by the judgment of the church, for the purpose of exercising discipline, and for managing those things necessary for the order and prosperity of the church. 5. *Deacons* are ministers chosen by the church to take care of the poor, and to attend to the distribution of the alms of the church.

IV. What are the duties devolving upon the Ministers of the church?

The duties of the ministers of the church include in general, 1. A faithful and correct exposition of the true and uncorrupted doctrine of the law and gospel, so that the church may be able to understand it. 2. A lawful administration of the sacraments, according to divine appointment. 3. To give the church a good example of what constitutes a christian life and godly conversation. "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works." (Tit. 2: 7.) 4. A diligent attention to their flocks. "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God." (Acts 20: 28.) 5. To give proper respect and submission to the decisions of

the church. 6. To see that proper respect and attention be given to the poor.

V. To whom should the Ministry be committed?

The Apostle Paul plainly teaches, in his epistles to Timothy and Titus, to whom and to what persons the ministry ought to be committed by the church. To sum up the whole in a few words, we may say that the ministry of the church should be committed, 1. *To men*, and not to women. "I suffer not a woman to teach." (1 Tim. 12.) 2. To such as have a good report within and without the church. "A bishop must be blameless, have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (1 Tim. 3: 2, 7.) 3. To such as are able to teach, having a proper understanding of the doctrine, and possessed of such gifts as are necessary for its exposition. "A bishop must be apt to teach." "A workman that needeth not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth." "Holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." (1 Tim. 3: 2. 2 Tim. 2: 15. Tit. 1: 9.)

CONCERNING CEREMONIES.

A part of this fourth commandment being ceremonial, as has been shown in the remarks we have made, it seems proper that we should here make some remarks respecting ceremonies; and for a better understanding of the whole subject, we shall enquire,

I. *What are ceremonies?*
II. *In what ceremonies differ from moral works?*
III. *How many kinds of ceremonies are there?*
IV. *Is it lawful for the church to institute ceremonies?*

I. What are Ceremonies?

The Romans were wont to call every form of divine worship by the name of *ceremony*, from the town Cære, in which the images of the gods were kept from the Gauls, as Livy testifies in his fifth book. Macrobius derives the term from *carendo*. As understood by the church, all external and solemn actions instituted by the ministry, for the sake of order, or signification, are termed ceremonies.

II. In what do Ceremonies differ from moral works?

Ceremonies differ from moral works, in the following particulars: 1. Ceremonies are temporary; moral works are perpetual. 2. Ceremonies are always observed in the same way; moral works are not always performed in the same way. 3. Ceremonies signify; moral actions are signified. 4. The moral is to be viewed as the general; the ceremonial as the particular. 5. The moral is the end and design of the ceremonial; the ceremonial contributes to the moral. We may here refer the reader to what has already been said in regard to these differences under the subject of the Law.

III. How many kinds of Ceremonies are there?

There are two kinds of ceremonies—*some* that are commanded by God himself; and *others* that are instituted by men. Ceremonies which have been instituted by God, are such as constitute his worship, and can only be changed by God himself. *Sacrifices*, by which we offer and render obedience to God, are ceremonies of this sort, being divinely instituted. So the *sacraments*, by which God testifies and bestows his benefits upon us, are also divinely instituted. *Ceremonies instituted by the church* are not the worship of God, and may be changed by the advice of the church, if there are sufficient causes to demand a change.

IV. Is it lawful for the Church to institute Ceremonies?

The church may and ought to institute certain ceremonies, inasmuch as the moral worship of God cannot be observed without defining and fixing the various circumstances connected with it. We may, therefore, say that it is proper for the church to institute ceremonies when the following conditions are observed: 1. They must not be unholy; but such as are agreeable to the word of God. 2. They must not be superstitious—such as may easily lead men astray, so as to attach to them worship, merit, or necessity, and which may occasion offence when observed. 3. They must not be too numerous, so as to be oppressive and burdensome. 4. They must not be empty, insignificant, and unprofitable; but tend to edification.

THIRTY-NINTH LORD'S DAY.

Question. What doth God require in the fifth command?

Answer. That I show all honor, love and fidelity, to my father and mother, and all in authority over me, and submit myself to their good instruction and correction with due obedience; and also patiently bear with their weakness and infirmities, since it pleases God to govern us with their hand.

EXPOSITION.

The Laws of the second table of the Decalogue now follow, the obedience of which has respect to God as well as the commandments of the first table. The works, however, which are here enjoined are performed immediately towards men. The immediate object of the second table is our neighbor, whilst God is the mediate object.

Christ embodies the sum of the obedience required by the second table of the Decalogue in these words: *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;* and lays down this rule for the better understanding of the precepts of this table: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. 7: 12.) Christ also says, in reference to the whole second table: "And the second is like unto the first" (Matt. 22: 39); which must be understood:

1. Of the kind of worship which is enjoined in each table, which is spiritual, and more important than that which is ceremonial. 2. Of the same kind of punishment, which is threatened and inflicted upon all those who violate the commandments of either table; which punishment is eternal. 3. Of the inseparable connection which exists between the love of God and our neighbor, which connection is like that of cause and effect; so that the one cannot be without the other.

Obedience to the second table is therefore necessary, and exacted from us by God just as much as obedience to the first table. The reasons of this are such as these: 1. That God himself may be worshipped by this obedience, and that our love to him may be manifested by the love which we cherish towards our neighbor on God's account. 2. That our conformity with God may be made manifest by the love which we have towards our neighbor. 3. That human society may be preserved, which was formed and constituted by God for the praise and glory of his name.

This fifth commandment, moreover, respecting the honor due to parents, which Jerome expressly calls the fifth in order, is placed first in the second table: 1. Because it is the foundation, cause, and bond of obedience to all the other commandments belonging to this table. For if the obedience can be maintained and enforced, which is due from those who are placed in subjection to their superiors, who should command and preserve, in the name of God, obedience to the commandments which follow this precept of the Decalogue, then will obedience to all the other precepts necessarily follow. 2. Because God has connected with this commandment a special promise of long life, which is always regarded as a great blessing, to those who render obedience to this precept of the Decalogue.

This commandment consists of two parts: a command and a promise. The command is, *Honor thy father and thy mother*. The design or end of this commandment is the preservation of civil order, which God has appointed in the mutual duties between inferiors and their superiors. *Superiors* are all those whom God has placed over others, for the purpose of governing and defending them. *Inferiors* are those whom God has placed under others, that they may be governed and defended by them. Superiors are included in this commandment under the terms *father* and *mother*, and are: 1. Parents themselves, from whom we have proceeded. 2. Tutors and guardians of children. 3. Schoolmasters, teachers, and ministers of the gospel. 4. Magistrates, whether high or low. 5. Elders. All these persons, now, together with all others who may be placed in positions of authority, are comprehended under the term parents, as used in this commandment; and are to be honored by us, because God gives them all to us in the place of parents, whose duties they discharge, and are, so to speak, God's vicegerents in ruling and defending us, having been substituted by God in the room of parents, when the wickedness of men began to increase in the earth.

God, in this commandment, makes mention of parents in preference to other governors, and requires that they should be honored: 1. Because the paternal power and government was the first that was established amongst men. 2. Because this is, as it were, the rule and pattern according to which all other forms of government should be formed and exercised. 3. Because this form of government is the most agreeable to men, so that they readily submit themselves to it. 4. Because any and every contempt

or disrespect shown to parents, is a sin of the most grievous and aggravated character, and therefore condemned by God and punished most severely, inasmuch as the obligation to honor and obey them is of peculiar force and strength.

This commandment, therefore, does not merely require that we honor and respect our parents, but all who are in authority over us; and requires, also, on the other hand, obedience not merely from children, but from all inferiors, of whatever rank or grade. So the duties which these two classes of persons owe respectively to each other, are in like manner enjoined in this precept of the Decalogue; for when God requires parents to be honored, he at the same time demands that they so discharge the duties of parents as to be worthy of honor; and in thus enjoining the duties which are devolving upon parents, he also enjoins the duties of all others in authority, inasmuch as they are all comprehended in the term parents, as here used. So God in like manner enjoins the duties of children, when he commands them to honor their parents; and not only of children, but of all others in subjection, since God will have all those who are in positions of authority honored by those who are under them.

We may now, in view of what has just been said, easily return an answer to this objection: God, in this commandment, merely requires that parents should be honored, which is the duty of inferiors. Therefore he here commands nothing respecting superiors. Ans. We deny the consequence; for we may retort the argument of our opponents, and say: Because God commands parents to be honored, he also enjoins the duties which are devolving upon all those who are in authority; for when God gives the name to those who occupy positions of authority, he also grants them that from which they have the name; and if he desires them to be honored, he also requires them to do such things as entitle them to honor and respect. And although it may sometimes be the case that wicked men are elevated to positions of authority, who are not worthy of honor; yet the *office* must be distinguished from the *persons* who are invested with it; so that whilst we detest the wickedness of the men, we should nevertheless honor their office, on account of its divine appointment. And as they are to be honored on account of their office, which is to rule their subjects according to the will of God, whose ministers they are, it is manifest that we must obey them only in as far as they do not go beyond the proper limits of their office.

The promise annexed to this commandment is, *That thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* God added this promise: 1. That he might invite and urge us the more strongly to obey this precept by placing before us so great a benefit, as a reward. 2. That he might in this way declare how highly he esteems those who honor their parents, and how severely he will punish all those who withhold this honor and respect. 3. That he might teach us how necessary obedience to this commandment is, inasmuch as it is a preparation and constraining motive of obedience to all the commandments which follow. Hence Paul, in referring to this promise, says that it is the first commandment with promise; by which he means that it is the first commandment which has the promise of any special or certain benefit, which God promises to bestow upon those who render the obedience which it requires. The blessing which God here promises is a long life upon earth.

Obj. 1. The first table has also a promise annexed to it. Therefore this commandment is not the first with promise. Ans. This commandment has a special promise, whilst the promise of the first table is general.

Obj. 2. But a long life does not seem to be a blessing, in view of the miseries which are connected with this present state of being. Therefore it is a useless promise. Ans. That a long life seems not to be a blessing, comes to pass by an accident; for in itself it is a great blessing, although it is connected with much misery and suffering. To this the following objections are brought forward: 1. A good connected with great evils is rather to be deprecated than desired. A long life now is connected with great evils. Therefore it seems, on account of this accident, rather to be deprecated than to be desired. We reply, that a good is to be deprecated, if the evils connected with it are greater than the good itself. But God promises to the godly, in connection with a long life, a mitigation of the calamities to which we are here subject; and a long enjoyment of his blessings, even in this life. Then, too, the constant worship and praise of God in this life is a blessing of such great value, that the various calamities to which we are here subject are not worthy to be compared with it. Obj. 2. But the wicked and disobedient are also often blessed with a long life. Therefore it is not a blessing peculiar to the godly. Ans. A few exceptions do not overthrow a general rule; for the wicked and disobedient, for the most part, perish prematurely and suddenly. "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pluck it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." "Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness." (Prov. 30: 17; 20: 20.) Again: temporal blessings are bestowed upon the godly for their salvation, and are therefore evidences of God's favor towards them; whilst they are conferred upon the ungodly partly that they may be rendered inexcusable, inasmuch as they have been in this way called to repentance, and partly that the godly and the elect, who are mixed with them, may enjoy these things. Obj. 3. But many obedient and godly children die at an early age, and do not live to enjoy the blessing of a long life. Therefore the promise is not universal. Ans. We may here reply, as we did to the former objection, that a few exceptions do not destroy the force of a general rule. The godly, for the most part, have the truth of this promise verified in their case. Promises of temporal blessings, too, must be understood as making an exception respecting chastisements and the cross. And still further, an early translation to another and better life, even a heavenly life, is a most ample recompense for a long life.

The obedience required by this commandment comprehends three parts: 1. The proper virtues of superiors, or those who are placed in authority. 2. The proper virtues of inferiors, or those who are in subjection. 3. The virtues common to both.

The proper virtues of Superiors, distinguished according to their respective offices.

The office and duties of *parents* require:

1. That they should nourish and cherish their children. (Matt. 7: 9.)
2. That they should defend their children from injuries. (1 Tim. 5: 8.)

3. That they should instruct or give them over to others, that they may be instructed and properly educated. (Eph. 6: 4. Deut. 4: 9.)

4. That they should govern them by such discipline as belongs to the domestic constitution. (Prov. 13: 1; 19: 18.) The same duties are devolving upon *guardians* or tutors, who occupy the place of parents.

The faults or sins of parents, in opposition to the duties just enumerated, are:

1. Not to seek or provide the support and nourishment necessary for their children, or to bring them up in luxury and extravagance.

2. Not to protect them from injuries, or not to accustom them to patience and gentleness; or to sin, by manifesting an imprudent zeal and passion, when small, or even no injuries are inflicted upon our children.

3. Not to educate their children, or to have no care to have them educated according to their own, or their children's ability; or to corrupt them by their own evil example, or bad instructions.

4. To raise their children in idleness and licentiousness; or not to correct them when necessity requires it; or to chastise them with greater severity than duty or the nature of the offence demands, and so to alienate their affections by too great severity and cruelty.

The office *of schoolmasters or teachers* requires them,

1. Faithfully to teach and instruct the pupils committed to their care, seeing that they occupy the place of parents in this respect.

2. To rule and govern them with proper and suitable discipline. The same faults and sins which we have just enumerated as often attaching themselves to parents, in the education and government of their children, are the ones which are found in connection with schoolmasters and teachers.

The duties *of magistrates* may be reduced to these heads,

1. To require from their subjects obedience, and external propriety according to both tables of the Decalogue.

2. To enforce the precepts of the Decalogue, by defending those who yield obedience to it, and punishing such as are disobedient.

3. To enact certain positive laws for the maintenance of civil order. By *positive laws*, we mean such as determine and prescribe those circumstances which are necessary for the preservation of the order and honor of the state, and which contribute to the obedience which the law of God requires.

4. The execution of the laws which they prescribe from time to time.

There are two extremes in opposition to the duties of magistrates. *The first is remissness*, or a want of proper attention to their duties, which shows itself, either in not requiring from their subjects obedience to the whole Decalogue; or in not enacting such things as are necessary for the preservation and order of civil society; or in not defending the innocent from the wrongs which may be inflicted upon them; or in not enforcing, or punishing too lightly those who violate the law of God, or such positive laws as have been enacted from time to time. *The other extreme is tyranny*, which consists either in demanding from their subjects what is unjust; or in not punishing those who sin; or in punishing them more severely than the offence which they have committed calls for.

The duties of *Masters* are,

1. To enjoin upon their servants such things as are just and possible;

or to command such works as are becoming and lawful; and not such as are unlawful, impossible, oppressive and unnecessary.

2. To afford them proper food and reward them for their labor.

3. To rule and govern them with such discipline as is suited to their case. The whip, fodder and burdens belong to the ass; bread and correction to the servant.

The faults of masters are,

1. To indulge their slaves in idleness, slothfulness and licentiousness.

2. To command things which are unjust, and to oppress them by exacting too much from them.

3. To withhold from them proper food and wages.

4. To exasperate their household by the exercise of too much rigor and severity.

The duty of elders, and others who excel in wisdom and authority, is to govern and assist others by their examples, counsels and admonitions. These persons sin and act contrary to the duties of their calling, 1. When they are guilty of folly, or of giving improper counsels. 2. When they show levity and a want of gravity in their manners, and present a bad example to others. 3. When they neglect by their counsels and authority to reprove and correct others who are under them when they see them sin and do that which is wrong.

The virtues proper to inferiors, or such as are in subjection.

The commandment which we are now considering comprehends the duties which are proper to inferiors under the term *honor*, which includes, *first*, *reverence to those* who are over them, which is, 1. An acknowledgement of the will of God, who has been pleased to institute such an office, and to endow those who are invested with it, with necessary gifts. 2. An approbation of this divine order, and of the gifts which God confers upon those whom he calls to serve him in this capacity: for if we are not convinced of the excellency of this order we will not honor it. 3. Subjection to this order on account of the will of God. 4. An outward declaration, both in word and deed, of this judgment and approbation. *Secondly*, love to those who are over us in view of the office which they fill. This love is closely connected with reverence, inasmuch as we cannot reverence those whom we do not love. *Thirdly*, *obedience* to what those in authority command by reason of their office and calling, which obedience should be voluntary, as children delight to do those things which are pleasing to their parents. *Fourthly*, *gratitude* to superiors, which requires that every one in his appropriate sphere aid and promote the interest of those over him according to his ability, and as occasion presents itself. *Fifthly*, *moderation* and forbearance, which shows itself in bearing with the faults and infirmities of parents and superiors, which may be done without any reproach to the name of God, or which are not in direct opposition to the divine law. From these things we may easily infer what duties are enjoined upon inferiors, and what things in accordance with their own callings, they owe to the different grades, or ranks of those who are in authority.

Inferiors, or those who are in subjection, violate the honor which is due those who are over them, either when they do not regard them as occupying

the place to which they have been called of God, or when they ascribe to them more honor than is becoming to men, or when they hate them for executing that which their office requires them to do, or when they esteem them more highly than they do God, or when they refuse to yield obedience to their just and lawful commands, or when they obey them only in appearance, and also when they command things which are unjust and wicked, or when they heap upon them injuries and reproaches, and do not aid them in such ways and by such means as are in their power, or when they entertain them with flattery and in other ways which are unbecoming, or when they magnify their infirmities and faults, or when they flatteringly praise their faults and misdeeds, and do not admonish them with becoming reverence according to the position which they occupy, of their pernicious and aggravated sins.

The virtues which are common to superiors and inferiors, or to those who are in authority and in subjection.

The duties which are devolving upon all men, or the virtues which are here required of all the different grades and ranks of men, whether they be in authority or not, with the vices which are opposed to these virtues, are,

1. Universal justice, which shows itself in obedience to all the laws pertaining to us in our respective callings. That this virtue is here enjoined is evident, inasmuch as those who are in authority should demand it from their subjects, and provoke them to such obedience by their own example; whilst those who are in subjection are commanded to yield obedience to all those commands which are just and proper.

The opposite of this universal justice includes, 1. Every neglect of such duties as just and wholesome laws require from every one, whether he be a ruler or subject. 2. All obstinacy, disobedience and sedition. 3. Hypocrisy and eye-service.

II. Particular distributive justice, which is a virtue contributing to and preserving a just proportion in the distribution of offices, rewards and punishment; or it is a virtue giving to every one that which rightfully belongs to him. That now which belongs to every one is the office, the honor or reward which is suited to him, and for which he is adapted. "Render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." (Rom. 13: 7.)

The opposite of this virtue includes error, want of judgment and partiality in distributing offices, or conferring honors, and in bestowing rewards.

III. Laboriousness, *diligence and fidelity*, which consists in correctly understanding those parts which properly and perpetually belong to every man's calling in life, and in performing them according to the command of God cheerfully, constantly, diligently and with the attempt to discharge properly every known duty, omitting whatever is foreign to any one's appropriate calling, and whatever is unnecessary, with this chief design, that whatever is done may be pleasing to God, and contribute to the salvation of our fellow men. "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands as we commanded you." "He that ruleth let him do it with cheerfulness." "Be obedient as the servants

of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." (1. Thes. 4 : 11. Rom. 12 : 8. Eph. 6 : 6. Eccl. 9 : 10.) It is also proper that we should here remark, that this virtue does not merely consist in knowing what are the different parts of our calling and duty, but also in enquiring continually whether there be not something still required of us of which we are ignorant; for he who is ignorant of his duty and yet does not seek to know it, is guilty of neglecting his duty, inasmuch as his ignorance does not excuse him, being voluntary and coveted.

There is opposed to this virtue, 1. *Negligence or slothfulness*, which shows itself either in not endeavoring to find out what is duty, or in willingly omitting what is plainly required by our calling in life, or in discharging the duties of our respective callings unwillingly, only in part, and without becoming diligence. 2. *A mere show of diligence*, or dissembled assiduity, which consists in doing that which belongs to any one's calling in life, from selfish motives, or for the sake of our own praise and benefit. 3. *Curiosity*, which shows itself in meddling with, and attempting things which do not properly belong to any one's calling.

IV. Love *to those who* are joined to us by consanguinity, as parents, children and relatives: for when God command that parents should be honored, he also desires that they should be loved, and that as parents; and so, on the other hand, when he blesses persons with children, he designs that they should love them, and that not as strangers, but as children.

The opposite of this virtue includes: 1. *Unnaturalness*, which either hates, or does not cherish those who are allied to us by the ties of nature, or is not concerned for their safety. 2. *Excessive indulgence*, which shows itself either in winking at the sins and follies of our children and friends, injurious alike to themselves and others, on account of the love which we have towards them, or in gratifying them in things prohibited by God.

V. Gratitude, which is a virtue consisting of truth and justice, acknowledging from whom, what, and how great benefits we have received, and at the same time having a desire or will to perform in return such things and duties as are becoming and possible. "Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house." (Prov. 17 : 13.)

The opposite of this virtue includes: 1. *Ingratitude*, which either does not acknowledge, or does not profess the author and the greatness of the benefits received, or which has no desire to make suitable returns for the same. 2. Such returns or acknowledgments of benefits as are unlawful.

VI. Gravity, which is a virtue arising from a knowledge of our calling and rank in society, observes what is becoming and proper to the person, and maintains a constancy and evenness in the words, carriage, and actions of the life, that so we may preserve the authority and good report which we have, and not bring a disgrace upon our calling; for seeing that God desires that those placed in authority should be honored, he at the same time desires that they themselves should guard and maintain their own honor. Now, *glory*, being that of which our own conscience and that of others approves, judging correctly, since it is a virtue necessary for the glory of God and the salvation of men, is greatly to be desired, when these ends are regarded. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." "A good name is better than precious ointment." "But let every man

prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity and sincerity." (Prov. 21: 1. Ecc. 7: 1. Gal. 6: 4. Tit. 2: 7.)

We may mention as opposed to this virtue, 1. *Levity*, which shows itself in a want of regard to what is becoming and of good report in the words, carriage and actions of the life, and which has no desire to retain a good name and opinion amongst men. 2. *Haughtiness or ambition*, which consists in being elated and filled with pride on account of the office and gifts which any one possesses and holds, so as to despise and overlook others, and to aspire after still higher offices, and greater honor and applause from men, being actuated thereto merely by a desire to excel and be above others, and not to advance the glory of God and the welfare of our fellow-men.

VII. Modesty is a virtue closely allied to gravity, which, from a knowledge of our own weakness, and from a consideration of the office and position which we occupy by divine appointment, maintains a consistency and propriety in the actions and deportment of the life, regardless of the opinions and remarks which men may make and entertain respecting us, with this design, that we do not arrogate to ourselves more than is becoming, or defraud others of the respect and honor due them; that we do not make a greater display in our apparel, walk, conversation and life, than is proper and needful; that we do not esteem ourselves more highly than others, or oppress them; but maintain a deportment according to our ability and strength, with an acknowledgment of God's gifts in others, and of our faults and imperfections. This and the former virtue are, as has just been remarked, closely allied; for gravity without being joined with modesty, soon degenerates into ambition and haughtiness. "For if a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." (Gal. 6: 3.) Humility and modesty differ from each other in this, that modesty is directed towards men, and consists in acknowledging our own faults and the gifts of which others are possessed; whilst humility has respect to God.

The following vices are opposed to this virtue: 1. *Immodesty*, which transcends the bounds of propriety in the words, actions and deportment of the life, both as it respects ourselves, and those with whom we hold daily intercourse. 2. *Arrogance*, which in conceit and outward declaration takes to itself more than it really possesses, or admires its own gifts and attainments more than there is any necessity of doing, and so extols and boasts of them beyond measure. 3. *A counterfeiting or mere show of modesty*, which evinces itself in the admiration which any one has of himself, whilst he, nevertheless, feigns to be backward in accepting of honors and offices, which he all the while desires, in order that he may advance his own praise and conceit of modesty.

VIII. Equity, which is a virtue that mitigates, in view of some just and probable cause, the rigor of strict justice in punishing and correcting the errors of others; and which endures with patience such defects as do not seriously injure and endanger the safety of our fellow-men, whether publicly or privately, and which studiously covers and corrects such vices whenever they are found in others. "Servants be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." (1 Pet. 2: 18.) We may here also appropriately cite the example of the

sons of Noah, as recorded in the ninth chapter of Genesis, and likewise the commandment of the apostle Paul, respecting the moderation and gentleness which parents should exercise towards their children in correcting them: "Fathers provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." "Fathers provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." "Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven." (Eph. 6: 4. Col. 3: 21; 4: 1.)

The opposite of this virtue embraces, 1. *Immoderate riyor* in censuring and reproving those faults which proceed for the most part from infirmity, without any serious injury, either to their own, or others' safety. 2. *Too great lenity*, which shows itself in not punishing or reproving great and aggravated sins. 3. *Flattery*, which, for the sake of gaining popularity or advancing personal interests, praises that which ought not to be praised, or attributes more to a certain one than is becoming.

FORTIETH LORD'S DAY.

Question 105. What doth God require in the sixth command?

Answer. That neither in thoughts, nor words, nor gestures, much less in deeds, I dishonour, hate, wound, or kill my neighbour, by myself or by another; but that I lay aside all desire of revenge: also, that I hurt not myself, or wilfully expose myself to any danger. Wherefore also the magistrate is armed with the sword, to prevent murder.

Question 106. But this command seems only to speak of murder.

Answer. In forbidding murder, God teaches us, that he abhors the causes thereof; such as envy, hatred, anger, and desire of revenge; and that he accounts all these as murder.

Question 107. But is it enough that we do not kill any man in the manner mentioned above?

Answer. No; for when God forbids envy, hatred and anger, he commands us to love our neighbour as ourselves; to show patience, peace, meekness, mercy, and all kindness towards him, and prevent his hurt as much as in us lies; and that we do good even unto our enemies.

EXPOSITION.

The end or design of this commandment is the preservation of the life and health of the body, and so of the safety both of ourselves and of others. All those things, therefore, which have respect to the safety and preservation of our own life and the lives of others, are here enjoined; whilst, on the other hand, every thing is prohibited which tends to the destruction of life, which may be said to include every unlawful injury, and every desire of inflicting a wrong which any one may cherish, with every expression of this desire. It is called *murder* in this prohibition, or commandment, not because God prohibits this alone, but that in removing the

effect he may at the same time remove all the causes which contribute to it, and that embracing under the term murder, all the sins which are connected with it, he may, by showing its aggravated character, the more effectually restrain us from these sins, according to the rule, *that when any particular virtue is commanded or vice forbidden, the general virtues and vices, or whatever is connected with it, is at the same time commanded or forbidden.*

We must here show, 1. That this commandment enjoins and forbids not only what is external, but also what is internal. 2. That it prohibits any injury done to ourselves or others. 3. That it requires us to defend ourselves and others.

1. That this commandment prohibits and requires what is internal, is proven, 1. By this rule, that *when an effect is commanded or forbidden, the cause is also understood as being commanded or forbidden.* 2. From the design of this commandment. God does not will that we should injure any one. Therefore he also forbids the means by which we might inflict a wrong upon any one. 3. From the interpretation of Christ: "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." (Matt. 5 : 22.) Hence with external murder there is prohibited at the same time every wrong inflicted upon our neighbor, together with all the causes, occasions and signs of these injuries, such as anger, envy, hatred and desire of revenge.

2. This commandment prohibits every injury, or neglect not only to the lives of others, but also to our own life, inasmuch as the same causes are found in us, on account of which God will have us to regard the lives of others. These causes are, 1. *The image of God*, which we may not destroy either in ourselves or in others. 2. *The likeness of nature*, and our common origin from our first parents. For as our neighbor must not be injured and hurt by us because he is bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, so we are to inflict no wrong upon ourselves, for the reason that no man ever yet hated his own flesh. 3. *The greatness of the price*, by which Christ has redeemed us and others. 4. *The union, or conjunction*, which there is between those who are members of Christ. Inasmuch now as these causes are in like manner found in us, it follows that this commandment forbids every injury or neglect which any one may inflict upon himself.

3. This commandment requires us to protect and defend our neighbour; for seeing that the law commands us not only to shun and avoid sin of every description, but also to practice that which is opposite thereto, it is evident that God does not only here forbid us to injure the life and safety of any one, but commands us at the same time, as far as it is in our power, to cherish and defend our neighbor.

The sum and substance of this commandment is, that we neither hurt by any external act our own life, or the life of another, nor practice any injury upon our own, or the bodily safety of another, neither by force, nor treachery, nor negligence; and that we do not desire, either in thought or will, any injury to ourselves or others, nor signify the same by any signs, or words; but that we, on the other hand, as much as in us lies, preserve and protect our own, as well as the lives of others, and so prove ourselves a blessing to all. Hence when this commandment declares, *Thou shalt not kill*, it signifies, 1. Thou shalt cherish no desire to kill either thyself or others; for what God does not will us to do, that he does not permit us

to wish or desire. 2. Thou shalt not express or signify any desire to murder either thyself or others; for when God forbids any particular desire, he also forbids every expression of this desire, whether it be in the words, gesture or countenance of the person. 3. Thou shalt not put this desire into execution; for what God forbids any one to desire, or to signify by external signs, that he much more forbids to be executed. The opposite now of all this is, *Thou shall aid and assist thyself and others*, 1. In desire or heart. 2. In the signification of this desire. 3. In the execution of this desire. From this all the virtues of this commandment, as well as all the vices which are opposite thereto, take their origin. *The vices* which are forbidden in this precept of the Decalogue, tend to the destruction of life; whilst the virtues which it enjoins tend to the preservation of life, or the safety of men.

There are two ways in which we may contribute to the preservation of life; either by not injuring, or by rendering assistance to men. Hence there are two classes of virtues growing out of this commandment — the former including those which do not injure the lives and safety of men, the other including those which contribute to the preservation of life, and the safety of men. The virtues included in the former class consist of three kinds; for we may not injure any one, viz, either being not injured or provoked; or being provoked; or in both respects, whether provoked or not. *Particular justice* which does wrong to no one is included in the first; in the second, *gentleness and equity;* in the third, *peaceableness.* The virtues contributing to the safety of man are two-fold; for we may be said to aid, either by repelling evils and dangers, or by doing good. The first method includes *commutative justice, fortitude and indignation;* the other includes *humanity, mercy and friendship.*

The virtues which do not injure the safety of men.

I. Particular justice, injuring no one, is that, which does not injure the life or body of any one, neither from design, nor from negligence, by whom we have not been injured, unless God require it at our hands. Or it is a virtue which carefully avoids every injury which might be inflicted upon our own, or upon the safety of our neighbor, whether it be by violence, deceit or negligence. This is expressed in the words of the commandment, *Thou shalt not kill.*

That which is opposed to this virtue, and condemned by this commandment, includes, 1. *Every injury which* may be inflicted, either by design or by negligence, upon our own, or upon the life and body of another. 2. *Excessive lenity*, by which it comes to pass that they are not punished, who ought to be punished by those who are vested with the power to do so.

II. Gentleness, *or placability, or readiness to forgive*, which is a virtue, governing and controlling anger, is not provoked without any cause, nor by one that is trifling in its character; and where there is a cause of just displeasure, it does not desire the destruction of the person inflicting the wrong; but is indignant at the reproach which is cast upon the name of God, or at the injustice and injury inflicted upon our neighbor — it indulges no desire of revenging any injury however great it may be, but heartily desires the safety and well-being even of enemies, and those who deserve ill at our hands, and endeavors to contribute thereto according to

its own ability and their necessity. Or it is a virtue which moderates anger, and shows itself in shunning all unlawful excitement, and so moderates that anger which is lawful, that it does not pass beyond the limits which God has prescribed, and does not burn with a desire of revenge, but extends pardon even to enemies notwithstanding their offences and provocations have been great and heavy; so that the anger which is felt is not directed to the persons, but to the sins of the wicked, and that, too, in such a way that it desires the safety even of those who transgress under the most aggravated form. "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." (Matt. 5: 5.)

The opposite of this virtue comprises, 1. *Undue lenity*, which is not to be indignant in view of shocking injuries, and which does not restrain or punish them, or is, at least, too remiss in prohibiting and suppressing them. 2. *Hastiness of temper*, with every form of unlawful and immoderate anger. 3. *Desire of vengeance*, grudging and animosity.

III. EQUITY is a virtue closely allied to gentleness. It is the governness of stern justice (preserves a just proportion between punishment and crime) upon just and probable causes, as when in view of the crime itself, or our own duty, or the public and private safety of those who sin, or for the sake of avoiding offence, we yield somewhat of our right in punishing sins, or in demanding satisfaction for injuries received. "Let your moderation be known unto all men." (Phil. 4: 5.)

The *first* thing which we may mention as opposed to this virtue is, *immoderate severity or cruelty*, as when there is no proper regard to the circumstances under which men do wrong, concerning which it is said, *extreme right is extreme wrong*. 2. *Too great lenity*, which shows itself in not being influenced by those things which ought to influence us, as when God commands, &c. 3. *Partiality*.

IV. PEACEABLENESS, or a desire of peace and harmony is a virtue which consists in diligently and carefully avoiding all unnecessary occasions and causes of offence, discord, strife and hatred, and in reconciling those who are offended, either at us, or at others, and which for the sake of retaining or preserving peace does not shrink from troubles, or from the endurance of injuries, so long as there is no reproach cast upon the name of God, or grievous wrong inflicted upon our own safety or that of others. *In a word*, it is a virtue avoiding all offences and occasions of anger and discord, and which at the same time endeavors to remove and bring to an end such strifes and misunderstandings as arise from time to time.

There is opposed to this virtue, 1. *Quarrelsomeness*, which shows itself in giving and seizing occasions of strife, to which there is attached an eager desire or delight in contention, slandering, backbiting, whispering, &c. Hence all contentious persons, slanderers, backbiters, wisperers, &c., are here condemned. 2. *Such a lenity* as when any one desires to keep peace without any proper regard to the glory of God, or his own and neighbor's safety. This is a sinful gratification.

The virtues which contribute to the safety of men.

V. COMMUTATIVE JUSTICE IN PUNISHING is a virtue which preserves an equality between offences and punishments, inflicting either equal punishments, or less in view of just and satisfactory causes, having a proper

regard to the circumstances which should ever be taken into consideration in civil courts, for the sake of maintaining the glory of God, and the preservation of human society. For when God forbids the infliction of any wrong upon society, and wills that the magistrate be the defender and preserver of order according to the whole Decalogue, he also designs that those who manifestly and grossly violate this order be restrained and kept within proper bounds by just punishments. The magistrate, therefore, may be guilty of doing wrong not only in being cruel and unjustly severe, but also in being too lenient and in granting permission to certain persons to injure others. "Because thou hast let go out of thy hand, a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people." "He that killeth any man, shall surely be put to death." "Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death; but he shall surely be put to death. (1 Kings 20: 42. Lev. 24: 17. Num. 35: 31.) This form of justice, therefore, belongs to this commandment.

Obj. It is here said, *Thou shalt not kill.* Therefore no one must be put to death — consequently this justice is not comprehended in this commandment inasmuch as it cannot be maintained, without putting many to death. Ans. *Thou shalt not kill*, that is, not thou who art merely a private person, according to thy judgment and desire, when I do not command thee, and give thee any warrant from this law. But this does not do away with the office of the magistrate; "for he is the minister of God and does not bear the sword in vain." (Rom. 13: 4.) Hence when the magistrate puts wicked transgressors to death, it is not man, but God who is the executioner of the deed. We may also reply to this objection by reversing the argument thus: Therefore some are to be put to death, lest human society be destroyed by thieves and robbers.

The opposite of this virtue is, 1. Cruelty, or too great severity. 2. Private revenge. 3. Lenity, when those are not punished who ought to be punished. 4. Partiality. Or to express it more briefly we may say that the opposite of commutative justice is *injustice*, which either deos not punish at all, or else punishes unjustly.

VI. Fortitude is a virtue which braves such dangers as sound reasons requires us to meet and encounter for the glory of God, the salvation of the church and commonwealth, and for the preservation and defence either of ourselves or others against grievous wrongs and oppressions. The fortitude of the saints springs from faith, hope, and the love of God and our neighbor. *Heroic fortitude* is a special gift of God, as in the case of Joshua, Sampson, Gideon, David, &c. *Warlike fortitude* is the defender of justice, and the undertaker of just defence respecting ourselves and others, although it is not accomplished without great danger. *War* is either a necessary defence against such as are guilty of robbery, cruelty or oppression; or it is a just punishment for wicked outrages, which is undertaken by the force of arms by the ordinary power.

The opposite of this virtue comprises *timidity*, which shows itself in flying from necessary dangers; and *presumption, or fool-hardiness* in rushing into dangers unnecessarily.

VII. Indignation, or zeal is, from a love of justice, and from a regard to our neighbor, to be indignant on account of some grievous or outrageous wrong inflicted upon the innocent, and which, according to the ability which

any one possesses, endeavors to repel and revenge the wrong according to the commandment of God. Or, it is a virtue which is justly provoked and indignant on account of reproach cast upon the name of God and on account of some grievous wrong by which either God, or our neighbor is injured.

There is opposed to this, 1. *Unjust anger.* 2. *Lenity*, or remissness, which shows itself when there is no just grief or indignation felt in view of grievous injuries, and when there is no disposition to avenge them.

VIII. Humanity, or philanthropy, specially and properly so called, is a true and sincere good will, and desire to perform towards men what we desire others to perform towards us, with a declaration of good will in such words, actions and duties as are fit and becoming. Or it is benevolence in the mind, will and heart towards others, and a declaration of it in such words, actions and duties, as are possible and proper. This virtue is likewise called in the holy Scriptures the *love of our neighbor.* Philosophy terms it *humanity.* All men, by this virtue, perform towards others what they desire others to perform towards themselves. "Let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." (Gal. 6 : 10.)

The opposite of this virtue comprises, 1. *Inhumanity*, or moroseness, which either omits doing those things which humanity requires, or does the opposite. 2. *Ill-will*, or envy, which shows itself in grief at the good and prosperity of others, and in a desire to secure this good to itself, or at least to avert it from others. Mir nicht, dir nicht. 3. *Self-love*, with a neglect of our neighbor. 4. *Unlawful gratification.*

IX. Mercy is a grief felt in view of the calamities and misfortunes of the innocent, or such as fall through weakness and infirmity, with a desire and attempt to mitigate these calamities. Or it is a virtue which pities good men in their calamities, or those who sin through ignorance or infirmity, and which desires to remove their misfortunes, or at least alleviate them as much as justice will admit of, and which rejoices not in the calamities even of such as are our enemies. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matt. 5 : 7.)

There is opposed to this virtue on the side of want, 1. *A want of mercy*, or cruelty and hard-heartedness, which is seen in not having compassion upon those whom we ought to commiserate. 2. *Rejoicing in the calamities of others.* And on the side of excess we may mention *lenity*, as that which spares those whom God wills to be punished, which is a cruel mercy, by which society itself is injured, and also the person that is spared.

X. Friendship, a species of humanity, is a true and mutual good will between good men, formed by a knowledge which each party has of the other's virtues, or by the performance of such duties towards each other as are becoming and possible. "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly; and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." (Prov. 18 : 24.)

The extremes of friendship are, 1. *Enmity.* 2. *Neglect* of friends. 3. *Readiness* in contracting and breaking friendship. 5. *Flattery.* 6 *Unjust gratification.*

A table of the sixth commandment.

- The sixth commandment, *Thou shalt not kill,*
  - 1. Forbids every unlawful injury inflicted upon our own or our neighbor's life & safety. Our neighbor may be injured either
    - 1. By forsaking him, or by not assisting him according to our ability, which includes a neglect of the duties which are required for the preservation of life.
    - 2. By wronging or injuring him, which is done either
      - 1. By external force, or violence, as by
        - 1. Murder.
        - 2. Slandering.
        - 3. Injuries of every description.
      - 2. By internal affections such as
        - 1. Anger.
        - 2. Hatred.
        - 3. Desire of revenge.
  - 2. Commands the preservation of our own and of our neighbor's life and safety. This is done either
    - 1. By not injuring any one. Those ought not to injure others, who are
      - 1. Not provoked, which belongs to justice.
      - 2. Who are provoked, which is the province of gentleness and equity.
      - 3. Whether provoked or not, which is peculiar to peaceableness.
    - 2. By rendering assistance to others. This is done either
      - 1. By repelling injuries from our neighbor, which is done by
        - 1. Commutative justice in punishing.
        - 2. Fortitude.
        - 3. Indignation.
      - 2. By helping our neighbor, as
        - 1. By humanity.
        - 2. By mercy.
        - 3. By friendship.

FORTY-FIRST LORD'S DAY.

Question 108. What doth the seventh command teach us?

Answer. That all uncleanliness is accursed of God, and that therefore we must, with all our hearts, detest the same, and live chastely and temperately, whether in holy wedlock, or in single life.

Question 109. Doth God forbid, in this command, only adultery, and such like gross sins?

Answer. Since both our body and soul are temples of the Holy Ghost, he commands us to preserve them pure and holy; therefore he forbids all unchaste actions, gestures, words, thoughts, desires, and whatever can entice men thereto.

EXPOSITION.

God in this commandment enjoins and sanctions the preservation of chastity and marriage, and hence authorises marriage itself; for whenever God forbids any thing, he at the same time commands and authorises the observance of that which is opposite thereto. God, now, in this commandment forbids *adultery*, which is a violation of conjugal fidelity. When God singles out adultery as the most shocking and debasing vice of all the sins

which are repugnant to chastity, he at the same time prohibits and condemns all wandering and wanton lusts, whether they be found in married or unmarried persons, and prohibits all other sins and vices contrary to chastity, together with their causes, occasions, effects, antecedents, consequents, &c. And, on the other hand, he enjoins all those virtues which contribute to chastity. The reasons of this are these: 1. *When one thing is specified, all those are understood which are closely allied or connected with it.* Therefore, when adultery is prohibited, as the most shocking and debasing form of lust, we are to understand all other forms of lust as forbidden at the same time. 2. *Where the cause* is condemned, *there the effect* is also condemned; and where the effect is condemned, there the cause is condemned. Hence the antecedents as well as the consequents of adultery are here forbidden and condemned. 3. *The design* of this commandment is the preservation of chastity amongst men, and the guarding of marriage, or keeping it holy. Whatever, therefore, tends to the preservation of chastity, and the protection of marriage, is enjoined by this commandment, whilst that which is opposed thereto is forbidden. There are three virtues which we may speak of under the seventh commandment: *chastity, modesty and temperance.*

1. CHASTITY, in general, is a virtue contributing to the purity of body and soul, agreeing with the will of God, and shunning all lusts prohibited by God, all unlawful intercourse and inordinate copulation in connection with all the desires, causes, effects, suspicions, occasions, &c., which may lead thereto, whether in holy wedlock or in a single life. The term chastity comes, according to some, from the Greek καζω, which means to adorn, because it is an ornament, both of the whole man, and also of all the other graces or virtues. The name has, therefore, been given to this virtue by way of pre-eminence, inasmuch as it is one of the principal virtues which constitute the image of God, according as it is said, *God is chaste, and will be called upon by those who are of a chaste mind, and has regard to such prayers.*

Chastity is of two kinds—one of single life, the other of holy wedlock. *The former* is a virtue shunning all wanton lusts without marriage. *Conjugal chastity* is to preserve in holy wedlock the order instituted by the wonderful counsel and wisdom of God.

The causes of chastity are, 1. The command of God, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication; that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor." "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (1 Thes. 4: 3, 4. Heb. 12: 14.) 2. The preservation of the image of God. 3. A desire to avoid defacing or marring the image of God, and the union between Christ and the church, of which Paul speaks when he says, "Flee from fornication. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid." (1 Cor. 6: 15.) 4. Rewards and punishments.

We may mention as being in opposition to chastity, a dissembled chastity, an impure single life, whoredom, concubinage, incest, adultery, and all wanton and hateful lusts, in connection with their causes, occasions and effects.

All the various species of lust may be referred to these three classes:

The first class or kind are those which are contrary to nature, and from the devil—such as are even contrary to this our corrupt nature, not only because they corrupt and spoil it of conformity with God, but also because this our corrupt nature shrinks from them and abhors them. The lusts of which the apostle Paul speaks in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, are of this class, as the confounding of sexes, also abuses of the female sex. The magistrate should punish these heinous sins and abominable transgressions with extraordinary punishments. *Incest* is greatly opposed to this our corrupt nature, although examples of it occurred in our first parents. These examples, however, were of necessity, or by a divine dispensation, and are, therefore, to be regarded as exceptions to the general rule.

The second class of lusts are those which proceed from this our corrupt nature; as fornication committed by such as are unmarried, adulteries by persons that are both married, and intercourse between such as are married and unmarried. If a married person have connection with another person that is unmarried, it is *simple adultery*. But if one married person have intercourse with another person that is married, it is a *double adultery;* for he violates his own marriage, and also that of the other person. *Fornication* takes place when those that are unmarried have connection with each other. Magistrates ought by virtue of their office to punish severely fornication and adultery. God appointed and required capital punishment to be inflicted upon adulterers. And although he did not appoint death as the punishment of fornicators; yet, when he frequently declared in his word that no whore should be found among his people, he signified that it should be punished according to its heinousness and aggravated nature. There are other lusts which are committed by this our corrupt nature with an evil conscience; such as those evil desires to which we give indulgence, or with which we are delighted, and which we do not study and endeavor to avoid, which, although they are not punished by civil power, are nevertheless joined with an evil conscience, and punished by God.

The third class of lusts are the corrupt inclinations, to which good men give no indulgence, but which they resist, and from which they cut off all occasions, so that their consciences are not troubled, because they call upon God, seek the grace of resistance, and have in their hearts the testimony that their sins are graciously forgiven them. Marriage was instituted after the fall as a remedy against these sins. It is therefore said, in view of these inclinations, "It is better to marry than to burn." (1 Cor. 7: 9.) Yet Paul does not in these words approve of such marriages as are premature, injurious to the state, entered into before a suitable age, or which are against good customs and manners.

II. Modesty, or shamefacedness, is a virtue abhorring all uncleanness, joined with shame, grief and sadness, either on account of past impurity, or on account of fear of future uncleanness; having also a desire and purpose to avoid not only uncleanness itself, but everything that might lead to it. It is called by the Greeks αἰδως, which means bashfulness or shame, which Aristotle defines to be *a fear of disgrace.* This virtue is necessary for chastity, as a help, a cause, effect, consequent and sign of chastity.

The extremes, or vices which are repugnant to modesty, are: 1. *Immodesty*, or imprudence, which makes light of impurity. 2. *Stupidity*, or unrefined and perverse bashfulness, when any one is ashamed of that of

which he ought not to be ashamed, as of a thing proper and becoming, which calls for no shame. 3. *Obscenity* and scurrility.

III. Temperance is a virtue observing such limits as are becoming to nature, propriety, sound reason and the order of persons, places and times, according to the law of nature in things pertaining to the body; as meat, drink, &c. This is the mother and nurse of all the other virtues, and is the cause of chastity—without which there can be no chastity; for without temperance we cannot be chaste. "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares." "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess." "Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof." (Luke 21: 34. Eph. 5: 18. Rom. 13: 13, 14.)

The extremes of temperance are: 1. *Intemperance* in meat and drink, gormandizing, gluttony, drunkenness, inebriation; which signifies properly not the excess itself of drinking, but the nausea and reeling of the head, which are felt the day following. 2. *Luxury*, which is too much prodigality and profusion in food, clothing, equipage, &c. 3. *Hurtful temperance*, or too great abstinence, and such as does not agree with our nature, as the temperance of hermits and superstitious fasts.

CONCERNING MARRIAGE.

Since this commandment sanctions and authorizes marriage, it is proper we should here introduce some remarks in reference to it; and in doing so, we shall consider:

I. *What marriage is:*
II. *Why it was instituted:*
III. *What marriages are lawful:*
IV. *Whether it be a thing indifferent:*
V. *What duties devolve upon married persons:*
VI. *What things are contrary to marriage.*

I. What is Marriage?

Marriage is a lawful and indissoluble union between one man and one woman, instituted by God for the propagation of the human race, that we may know him to be chaste, and to hate all lust, and that he will gather to himself out of the whole human race, thus lawfully propagated, an everlasting church, which shall rightly know and worship him; and that it may be a society of labors, toils, cares and prayers, between persons living in a state of matrimony.

II. Why was Marriage instituted?

God himself is the author of marriage. It is, therefore, no human device or invention, but was instituted by God himself in Paradise, before the fall of man. The causes on account of which it was instituted are, as we may learn from the definition which we have just given: 1. That it

might be the means of perpetuating and multiplying the human race in a lawful manner. 2. The gathering of the church. 3. That it might be an image or resemblance of the union between Christ and the church. 4. That wanton and wandering lusts might in this way be avoided. 5. That there might be a society of labor and prayer between those who are married. This society or connection is closer and more intimate than that which exists between men generally. Hence, the prayers of those who are living in this state are more ardent, inasmuch as we more earnestly desire to help those by our prayers to whom we are united in the closest relations of life; as parents pray more fervently for their children, than the children do for their parents, for the reason, as it is commonly said, *Love descends, not ascends.*

III. What Marriages are Lawful?

That the union constituted by marriage may be lawful, the following things are necessary: 1. That it be a union contracted between persons fit to be joined together. 2. That it be contracted by the consent of both parties. 3. That it meet the approbation of parents, or those who are in the place of parents, and whose consent is required by the law. 4. That no mistake or error be made in the persons. 5. That suitable conditions, propriety and lawful means, be observed in the contract. 6. That it be contracted between two persons only. "The twain shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2: 23. Matt. 19: 5.) The fathers who lived under the Old Testament had many wives; but we must judge of the propriety and lawfulness of a thing not by examples, but by law. 7. That it be contracted in the Lord: that is, between the faithful, and with prayer. 8. That it be not contracted between persons who are forbidden, or who are of such near relationship, or degrees of kindred, as are forbidden by God and wholesome laws.

Kindred, or relation by blood, is either consanguinity or affinity. There are some, however, who regard kindred and consanguinity as one and the same thing. *Consanguinity* is between persons having sprung from the same stock or family, being closely allied by blood. *Affinity* is the relation between a man and his wife's kindred, arising from marriage. The *stock* is the person from whom the rest proceed or spring. Those, now, who are related by blood, are distinguished by lineage and degree. *Lineage* is the order or line of kinsfolk descending from one stock. The *degree* which distinguishes them is the distance of kinsfolk, whether on the side of the father or mother, from the original stock. This common rule is to be observed in reference to these degrees: *There are as many degrees as there are persons who have sprung from the stock.* The law of God forbids the second degree in marriage; wise and wholesome political laws forbid also the third degree. *Lineage* is either of ascendants, or of descendants, or of collaterals. *Ascendants* include the ancestors. *Descendants* include all the posterity. *Collaterals* are those who are not born one from another, but from the same persons. The lineage of collaterals is either equal or unequal. It is *equal* when the distance from the common stock is equal; and *unequal* when the distance is unequal. The degrees of consanguinity which God forbids to be united in the marriage relation may be found in the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus. And that these degrees are natural

and moral, is proven: 1. Because the Gentiles are said to have committed abominations on account of having violated them, and to have been rejected of God on this account. The Gentiles now had not the civil and ceremonial laws of Moses. 2. Because God punished or destroyed the world by the waters of the deluge for the violation of these laws, or for indulgence in wanton lusts and incestuous marriages. 3. From the design of this commandment, which is the prohibition of incest, which design is universal, perpetual and moral. 4. Paul most severely reproved the incestuous man, who had married his father's wife, of whom we have an account in the fifth chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, and commanded that he should be excommunicated. So John the Baptist also reproved Herod for having married his brother's wife, in that it was unlawful for him so to do. (Mark 6: 18.)

IV. Is marriage a thing indifferent?

Marriage is lawful for all who are fit or proper persons to enter into this state. It is a thing indifferent, by which we mean that it is neither commanded, nor prohibited by God, but left to the will and pleasure of those who possess the gift of continency. It is different, however, with those who do not possess this gift—to them it is not merely permitted, but commanded by God himself, that they marry in the Lord. Hence to these persons it is not a thing indifferent, but necessary, as is evident from what the Apostle says: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman; nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." "I say to the unmarried and widows it is good for them, if they abide, even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn." (1 Cor. 7: 1, 2, 8, 9.) A proper regard should be had to time, both in first and second marriages; nor should we give loose reins to our lusts and passions; but rather curb and restrain them by prayer, and earnest efforts to the extent of our power, so as not to wound our consciences or violate that which is proper and just. Plutarch, in his life of Numa, testifies how carefully the Romans guarded against this, and all improprieties in reference to marriage, when he says, "*Woman remained widows ten months after the death of their husbands; and that if any one married before the expiration of ten months, the laws of Numa required her to sacrifice a cow heavy with calf*, &c. The want of a proper regard to time in marriages, is a cause of many evils both in civil and ecclesiastical affairs. Yet those who have once lawfully and in the Lord contracted marriage, may not break or violate their vow, except for adultery.

V. What are the duties of married persons?

The common and mutual duties of married persons include, 1. Mutual love. 2. Conjugal fidelity, which requires that each one love the other only, and that constantly. 3. A community of good, together with sympathy in each other's sorrows and misfortunes. 4. The training and education of children. 5. Bearing each other's infirmities with a desire to remove them.

It is the duty of the husband, 1. To nourish and cherish his wife and

children. 2. To govern them. 3. To defend them. It is the duty of the wife, 1. To assist her husband in providing and preserving what pertains to the family. 2. To obey and reverence her husband. When these duties are not performed, there is a great breach of what tends to the lawful use of marriage.

V. What things are contrary to marriage?

The things which are contrary to marriage are the same as those which conflict with chastity. 1. Fornication and adultery, by which conjugal faith and chastity are violated by one, or both parties. Also incest, unlawful copulation, and abuse of marriage. 2. Hasty and rash divorces, which in former times were common among the Romans and Jews, and and which are even at this day frequent among uncivilized nations. The divorces of which we here speak are not such as take place on account of adultery, but from one person deserting or leaving the other. 3. Forbidding to marry.

FORTY-SECOND LORD'S DAY.

Question 110. What doth God forbid in the eighth command?

Answer. God forbids not only those thefts and robberies which are punishable by the magistrate, but he comprehends under the name of theft, all wicked tricks and devices, whereby we design to appropriate to ourselves the goods which belong to our neighbor; whether it be by force, or under the appearance of RIGHT, as by unjust weights, ells, measures, FRAUDULENT merchandise, false coins, usury, or by any other way forbidden by God; as also all covetousness, all waste and abuse of his gifts.

Question 111. But what doth God require in this command?

Answer. That I promote the advantage of my neighbor in every instance I can or may, and deal with him as I desire to be dealt with by others; further ALSO, that I faithfully labor, so that I may be able to relieve the needy.

EXPOSITION.

This commandment sanctions and authorises a distinction in property or possessions. *The end or design of this commandment* is, the preservation of the property or possessions which God has given to every one for the support of life: for if it is not lawful or becoming for us to steal, it is necessary that every man should possess that which lawfully belongs to him. God, therefore, in this commandment, forbids all frauds, together with all the cunning devices and arts by which the goods and possessions of our neighbor are injured, diminished or confounded so as to lose his right in them, or to make it doubtful. In forbidding these things, God at the same time enjoins all those virtues which contribute to the preservation of our neigbor's goods and possessions. *Thou shalt not steal*, that is, thou shalt not desire, or attempt to take to thyself thy neighbor's goods by fraud. Therefore, thou shalt defend, preserve and increase them, and give unto

thy neighbor what belongs to him. God calls the things that are forbidden *theft*, in order that he might comprehend and condemn under this, as being the grossest kind of fraud, all other sins of a kindred nature, with their antecedents and consequents.

The virtues of the eighth commandment.

I. COMMUTATIVE JUSTICE is a virtue in the acquisition of goods, which does not desire the possessions of another, and contributes to an arithmetical equality in contracts and in the ordinary traffic amongst men in the purchase and exchange of goods according to just laws. Commutative justice then consists in preserving an equality between merit and reward, wages and labor, &c., whether it be in the acquisition, or disposition of goods. Justinian, the Roman emperor, writes in relation to the possession and division of things: that some things *are common* to all by natural right, as the air, water, the sea, the shores of the sea, &c. Some things are *public*, as rivers, ports, the use of the banks of rivers, &c. Some belong to *no one* as things sacred, religious, and holy. The largest amount of things, however, belong to persons privately and singly, and are acquired in various ways. Those things, therefore, which are transferred to another owner, or which any one takes to himself, belong either to no one, or to some one. Those which belong to no one, become the property of the persons who acquire them. Those things which belong rightly to some one, can only pass into the hands of others, either by violence and against the will of the rightful owner, or by captivity in war; or with the consent of the owner, as by inheritance, or contract. Possessions pass into the hands of others *by inheritance*, either by will, or without any will. *A contract* is an agreement between certain persons in reference to the transfer, giving, or exchange of possessions according to just and wholesome laws. All contracts are included under commutative justice, and may be comprehended under ten classes. 1. *Buying and selling*, when an article passes from the vender to the purchaser, in such a way that the purchaser gives a just and equivalent price for it. This is sometimes accompanied with a condition of selling it again, or it may be without this condition. *The buying of revenues*, or the receiving an income belongs to this, and is no more to be regarded as usury, than the letting out of land, for which a certain yearly rent is required. 2. *Borrowing* is a contract according to which the use of a certain thing is transferred to another, in such a way that he returns that which is equivalent. There is something given in borrowing, not that the same thing may be returned, but only that which is similar or of equal value. *Lending* is that which takes place when the use of a certain thing is granted to some one for a certain length of time, when he is to return the self-same thing whole and without any injury, without having to pay any remuneration for the use of it. 4. *Donation*, when a certain thing is transferred to another person, without recompense, by the rightful owner, who alone has the right to give it by free will. But, should some one say, that justice demands that like should be given for like; and that inasmuch as this is not done in what is given as a donation, it must conflict with justice; we would reply that this is true only in case the things are given with the intention that a compensation be made. 5. *Exchange*, when things are exchanged by the consent of those who are the

lawful owners, or when one thing is given for another which is equal in value. 6. *Leasing or letting out*, is a contract according to which the use of a certain thing, without any right of possession, is given over to another person by the rightful owner, for a certain length of time, upon the condition that he to whom it is leased pay a given sum for its use, and return it again in a proper state at the expiration of the time for which it was let. 7. *Pledging or mortgaging* is when a certain thing is transferred to another person, which gives him a right to it as long as certain things which are due him are not paid; or it is a contract which takes place when a certain thing is delivered to another person upon this condition, that he has the right of using it according to his own pleasure, in case it is not redeemed within a given time. 8. *Committing in trust*, is a contract according to which neither the use nor possession, but only the keeping of a certain thing is entrusted to another person. 9. *Partnership* is a contract between certain persons, who associate themselves together in business, according to which one person gives his funds, and the other his attention or labor, upon the condition that they receive or bear an equal proportion of the loss or gain, and that neither one reap the entire gain, or sustain the whole loss. 10. There is, lastly, a contract according to which the use or possession of a piece of land is transferred by the owner to a farmer to till, upon the condition that he cultivate it, and be bound to render to the owner thereof some particular service. These different kinds of contracts are to be observed for the better understanding of commutative justice.

There is opposed to this virtue every unjust and unlawful transfer of property, whether it be effected *by violence*, as robberies, or *by fraud* and deceit, as theft. *Theft* is the taking of that which belongs to another, without his knowledge and will, with the intention to deprive him of it. There are many ways in which theft is practised both in public and private life, of which we may mention the following: 1. *Embezzling, or taking* that which belongs to the state or commonwealth. 2. *Sacrilege*, which consists in taking some sacred or holy thing. 3. *The various deceptions which are practised in merchandising*, as when any one uses fraud and artifice in effecting contracts, or sales, together with all the wicked tricks and devices by which any one designs to appropriate to himself what belongs to another. 4. *Usury* is the gain which is received in view of that which has been borrowed or loaned. All just contracts, the contracts of paying rent, a just compensation for any loss, partnership, buying, &c., are exempted from usury. There are many questions respecting usury concerning which we may judge according to the rule which Christ has laid down: *Whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.*

II. CONTENTMENT is a virtue, by which we are satisfied and contented with our present possessions, which we have honestly acquired, and by which we quietly endure poverty and other inconveniences, not desireng what does not belong to us, nor what is unnecessary. The extremes of this virtue are, on the side of want, *avarice and theft*; and on the side of excess, *a feigned refusal*, as when any one would make it appear that he is unwilling to receive that which he nevertheless would and greatly desires. Also, *inhumanity*, which is not to receive any thing.

III. FIDELITY is a virtue which has a concern and anxiety in regard to the losses and privations of another, and endeavors to avert them, willingly and diligently performing all the different duties which are devolving

upon us in our appropriate callings in order that we may have what is necessary to sustain us and ours, and that we may also have that with which we may supply the wants of others, all of which is done with the design that we may glorify God thereby. The extremes of this virtue are, 1. *Unfaithfulness*, which has no care in regard to the losses and injuries of others, and does not diligently perform what duty requires. 2. *Negligence and slothfulness*, which merely desires to reap public good without contributing any thing thereto.

Obj. But mention has already been made of fidelity in the fifth commandment. Therefore it does not properly belong here. Ans. It is not absurd, that one and the same virtue should be placed under different commandments for different ends and in different respects: for the ends and designs of different actions and virtues make a difference in the things themselves. Fidelity is placed under this commandment in as far as it includes a desire to guard against the disadvantages and losses of others, and to do those things by which we may acquire for ourselves food, raiment and such things as are necessary. And it is placed under the fifth commandment in so far as it includes obedience in doing our duty.

IV. Liberality is a virtue which contributes of its substance to those who are in want, from right considerations and motives: or it is a virtue by which those who are possessed of it communicate of their own possessions to others, without being urged thereto by any civil constraint, or enactment, but by the divine and natural law, or for the sake of godliness and charity, with a liberal heart, according to their ability and the necessity of others, knowing where, to whom, when, and how much they are able to give, and at the same time preserve a medium between penuriousness and prodigality.

The extreme of this virtue on the side of want, are *penuriousness, meanness, and covetousness*, which may be said to consist in a desire on the part of any one to increase his possessions by right or wrong; or which, by a want of confidence in God, and a trust in the possessions of fortune, is not contented with those things which God gives by lawful means; but desires more and more, and seeks to take to itself, even by unlawful means, what it has no right to, and does not give where God requires that we should exercise our liberality. The other extreme of this virtue shows itself *in prodigality*, or in a lavish expenditure of what God has committed to our trust, which gives beyond the bounds of propriety and without any necessity, being actuated thereto by delight in an excessive use or waste of our gifts and possessions.

V. Hospitality is a species of liberality, and is that by which we entertain strangers and travellers, and especially those who have been banished on account of the profession of the doctrine of the gospel, with true Christian charity and with all the duties of hospitality. Or it consists in liberality and kindness towards strangers, especially towards Christians, who are driven into exile on account of religion, or are forced to travel for the confession of the truth. The extremes of this virtue are, on the one side, *a want of hospitality* towards strangers, and on the other, *extravagance* in entertaining them, so exhausting the fountain of our beneficence that we are not left with those things which are necessary for ourselves.

VI. Parsimony is that virtue by which we guard against all unnecessary expense, and by which we take care of that which we have honestly

acquired for ourselves and for those who are connected with us in the relations life, not desiring more than what is necessary for our comfort. *Liberality* has *parsimony* connected with it: for liberality without parsimony runs into prodigality, and parsimony without liberality soon degenerates into covetousness. They are, therefore, virtues which are closely allied, and are two means between the same extremes, viz: covetousness and prodigality. Neither can any one be liberal, who is not parsimonious or frugal; nor can any one who is not frugal be liberal. *Liberality* enlarges our contributions according to sound reason; whilst *parsimony* restricts the same according to sound reason, retaining as much as propriety will admit of, and giving as much as is needed. It is in this way that these two virtues are exercised in regard to the same object, and are between the same extremes, so that the same vices which stand in opposition to liberality, are repugnant to parsimony, which vices are prodigality and covetousness.

VII. FRUGALITY is a virtue having respect to household affairs, disposing of what has been honestly acquired, properly and profitable, and for things necessary and useful, or which incurs expense merely for such things as are necessary and useful. It is closely allied to parsimony, and yet it is evidently not the same. *Parsimony* consists in giving moderately; *frugality* in a proper disposition of things. They are both referred to and comprehended under this commandment, because their opposite, which is prodigality, is here forbidden. The extremes of this virtue are the same as those which we mentioned under parsimony.

Objections against the distinction which we have made in reference to possessions.

Obj. 1. The Apostles had all good things in common. Therefore we ought to have all things in common. Ans. 1. The examples are not the same: for a community of goods in the time of the Apostles was easy and necessary. It was easy, because the disciples were few in number. It was necessary because there was great danger, that if they did not sell them, they would be wrested from them by violence. It is different, however, as it respects the church at the present time; for such a community of goods would now be neither easy nor necessary. The Apostles were, therefore, led, for just and sufficient reasons, to have such a community of goods, which causes are now no more in existence. 2. They did it freely, and not by any law constraining them to adopt such measures. Each one did it of his own accord. Hence Peter said to Ananias, "While it remained was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power." (Acts 5: 4.) It was, therefore, voluntary. 3. It was a particular custom, not having respect to the whole church: for it was not observed in all the churches. Alms were collected in Macedonia and Achaia, and sent to Jerusalem. 4. It was temporary; for it was afterwards abolished when the causes which first gave rise to it passed away.

Obj. 2. Things which are natural are unchangeable. Community of goods is natural. Therefore it is unchangeable, and is to be observed at this day. Ans. Natural things are unchangeable in respect to the moral law, but not in respect to natural benefits and utility.

Obj. 3. Christ said to the young man in the gospel, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor." (Matt. 19: 21.)

Ans. There is a difference in the examples: 1. Because the calling of a disciple was special, having respect to the apostleship. 2. Christ designed by this, to show this young man how far he was from the perfection of the law, of which he boasted. 3. Christ did not say, *give it in common*, or cast it in the common treasury, but *give to the poor*.

Obj. 4. All things belong to Christ. Therefore all things belong to Christians. Ans. All things are ours as it respects the right to the thing, but not as it respects our right in the thing. All things are due to us, but it is not proper for us to lay hold upon any thing before the time.

Obj. 5. Friends have things in common. Ans. Friends have things in common, not as it respects the ownership and possession of property, but only in their use and enjoyment, according to just laws; or they have them in common as touching the use and duties of propriety, advantage and necessity, according to sound reason: for we ought to desire those things from our friends, which we desire them to ask from us. All things, however, are not common among friends as touching their possession and right, because every one has a distinct possession and right to his own goods. This possession of goods or distinction of rights is recognized and sanctioned by this commandment, as we have already remarked; for if we may not steal, it is necessary that we should possess what properly belongs to us, and that for these reasons: 1. That we may honestly maintain and support ourselves and those who are depending upon us. 2. That we may have something to contribute towards the preservation of the church. 3. That we may assist in upholding the interests of the state according to our ability. 4. That we may be able to confer benefits upon our friends, and contribute to the relief of the poor and needy.

FORTY-THIRD LORD'S DAY.

Question 112. What is required in the ninth command?

Answer. That I bear false witness against no man, nor falsify any man's words; that I be no backbiter, or slanderer; that I do not judge, or join in condemning any man rashly or unheard; but that I avoid all sorts of lies and deceit, as the proper works of the devil, unless I would bring down upon me the heavy wrath of God; likewise, that in judgment and other dealings I love the truth, speak it uprightly, and confess it: also, that I defend and promote as much as I am able the honor and good character of my neighbor.

EXPOSITION.

The design or end of this ninth commandment is the establishment and preservation of truth amongst men. It forbids, therefore the bearing of false witness, and all other things which are closely allied to it, the genus of which is lying. *Thou shalt not bear false witness of, or against thy neighbor.* There is in this negative precept, an affirmative which is, *Thou shalt bear true witness of, or for thy neighbor*; that is if thou wilt be true, love to learn and speak the truth. The head, the fountain and genus, as it were, of the virtues which are here enjoined, *is truth*,

or rather *veracity* in our words, thoughts, judgments, contracts and in our doctrine. For by *truth*, as it is here used, we are to understand the agreement or correspondence which our knowledge or words have with the thing of which we affirm something. We call that speech or declaration *true* which harmonises and agrees with the thing itself. So on the other hand, *falsehood*, in the premises which we have laid down, is the fountain, the genus of all the vices which are here condemned.

The Virtues of the Ninth Commandment.

1. TRUTH or veracity is a firm purpose or choice in the will, by which we constantly embrace true thoughts and opinions, and profess and defend the same according to a sense of duty and the circumstances in which we are placed; keep contracts and promises, and avoid, both in our speech and deportment all deceitful dissemblings, for the glory of God and the safety of our neighbor. According to this end, the devil cannot be true, even though he may at times speak that which is true; for he alone is *true* who speaks and loves the truth, and has a desire to promote it for the glory of God and the safety of his fellow-men. Aristotle reasons in his Ethics briefly, but most learnedly concerning this virtue. He refers truth in contracts to justice, and calls him properly a *true man*, who, when it profits him nothing, is, nevertheless, true in his speech and life, and is habitually such; from which it again appears that the devil and men are liars, and not true, although they may sometimes speak the truth.

Truth comprehends *liberty of speech* or boldness, which is a virtue by which we profess the truth fearlessly and willingly to as great an extent as is required by the time, place and necessity of the occasion. *The confession of the truth* is enjoined both in this and in the third commandment, as the same virtue is often regarded and included in the obedience of different commandments; yet it is required here in a different respect from what it is in the third commandment. There it is required as it is the immediate worship and praise of God: here as we are unwilling to deceive our neighbor, but desire that his character and safety be preserved.

There is opposed to this virtue on the side of want, 1. *Falsehood or lying*, which comprehends all the various kinds of fraud, deceit, dissembling, lies of courtesy, slanders, backbitings and evil speaking, which forms of lying are also opposed to candor. The same thing may also be said of such *negligence* as does not seek to obtain a true knowledge of things, together with wilful ignorance which is a lie in the understanding. 2. *Vanity or levity*, which is a readiness for lying. He is a vain person who lies much, often, and readily, and that without any shame. *He is a liar* who has a desire and fondness for lying. *A lie* is when any one speaks, or declares by outward signs differently from what he thinks, and from what the thing itself is. *To lie* is to go against one's own mind and knowledge. All lies, now, which clearly dissemble and cover the truth, are here condemned; nor are those lies which are uttered for politeness sake, excused, because we may not do evil, that good may come. Lactantius very correctly says, "*We should never lie, because a lie always injures or deceives some one.*" Truth, however, which is uttered by a sign, is no lie, whether he to whom the sign is made, understands it or not. Yet we may here remark, that we should not be too severe and rigid in passing sentence upon the actions of the saints,

neither should we make an apology for those things which need none. Officious lies are often defended by bringing forward the Egyptian midwives, who lied to the king, and were nevertheless blessed of God: but God did not bless them because they lied, but because they feared him and would not slay the children of the Israelites.

Obj. That which profits another, without injuring any one, may be done. Lies which are uttered out of respect or for fear of giving offence, do not injure any one, but may result in good. Therefore they may be uttered without any sin. Ans. We deny the minor proposition, because that which God prohibits always injures some one; and if such lies ever profit any one, it is by an accident, on account of the goodness of God. (See Augustin lib. de mendatio ad Consentium.)

There is opposed to truth, as it respects the other extreme: 1. *An untimely profession of the truth*, which is to cast pearls before swine, and to give that which is holy to the dogs, as Christ says; who, by these words, forbids such a profession of the truth as is not made at the proper time, and when no necessity demands it: for it is correctly said, *He who admonishes at the wrong time, injures.* 2. *Curiosity*, which is to inquire into what is not necessary, or impossible. Let these remarks suffice respecting truth, the principal virtue comprehended under this commandment. All the other virtues which are here commended wait upon truth, or contribute to it, and are, as it were, certain appendages of it.

II. CANDOR is a virtue which understands, in a proper light, things correctly and honestly spoken or done, and puts the most favorable construction upon such things as are doubtful, in as far as there are any just reasons for so doing; and does not readily entertain suspicions, or indulge in them, although there might be sufficient cause for so doing; and does not base any actions upon these suspicions, nor resolve anything in consequence thereof. Or, it is a virtue closely related to truth, sanctioning other conclusions when there are probable reasons for them; not indulging any ill-will; understanding in the most probable light things that are doubtful, and hoping that which is good; but yet thinking, concerning things changeable, that the minds of men may be changed, and that a man may err respecting another's intention, since the inmost recesses of the human heart are never brought fully to light.

There is opposed to candor, as it respects the want of it, *calumny* and *suspiciousness*. *Calumny* is not only to criminate and find fault with the innocent, where there is no reason for it, but it is also to put the very worst construction upon things spoken indifferently, or to propagate and coin what is false. *Suspiciousness* is to understand things, spoken correctly or ambiguously, in the worst light, and to suspect evil things from those that are good; or to entertain suspicions where there is no just cause for so doing; and where there are any proper reasons for suspicions, to indulge in them to too great an extent. It is lawful for us, at times, to have suspicions, unless we wish to be the dupes and fools of others. Hence, the Saviour says, "Beware of men." "Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves." (Matt. 10: 16, 17.) But it is one thing to have suspicions, and another to indulge in them. *Suspicion*, now, is the entertaining of an evil or unfavorable opinion of some one, on account of some probable and sufficient cause, whether true or apparent. It is two-fold: good and evil. 1. *It is evil* when it proceeds from a cause altogether false or insufficient,

as when a certain cause is imagined which is groundless, or when our neighbor is innocent. *It is good* when our suspicions are based upon just and sufficient grounds. 2. *It is an evil* suspicion when any one resolves upon something merely upon suspicion. *It is good* when the matter is left in suspense, as long as there are probable causes on both sides. 3. *It is evil* when any one conceives the design to injure a certain one, merely upon the ground of suspicion. *It is good* when the contrary takes place. 4. *It is evil* when any one is led to indulge hatred to another, upon the ground of suspicion. *Good suspicions* proceed differently.

There is on the other side of this virtue, as it respects the extreme of excess: 1. *Foolish credulity and flattery. Blind* or *foolish credulity* is to interpret anything rashly or hastily, and to assent to it without just and probable reasons; or, it is to believe a thing upon the declaration of another, when there are evident and sufficient reasons to the contrary. *Flattery* consists in praising and admiring things which should not be praised, for the purpose of obtaining the fortune or favor of some one. Candor is an assistant, or species of truth, and is, therefore, here enjoined and commended, in connection with truth.

III. Simplicity is truth in its nakedness, without any shiftings, prevarication, or quibbles; or, it is a virtue which honestly and openly speaks and does what is true, right, and understood in arts and common life. Truth is regulated and tempered by candor and simplicity. The extremes of this virtue are a feigned simplicity, and duplicity in manners and conversation.

IV. *Constancy* is a virtue which does not depart from the truth in as far as it is known, and which does not change its purpose and design without a necessary and sufficient reason; but constantly says and does what is true, just and necessary. Or, it is a virtue holding fast to the truth once discovered, known and approved of, with a profession and defence of it in the like manner. Constancy is necessary for the preservation of truth, and is, therefore, here enjoined. The extremes of this virtue are on the side of want, *inconstancy*, which is to change one's mind or opinion without any sufficient reason; and, on the side of excess, it is *obstinacy* or stoical rigor, which clings to false opinions, and persists in doing what is unjust and unprofitable, although convinced to the contrary. It is a vice which arises from the confidence which any one has in his own wisdom, or from pride and ostentation, and shows itself in an unwillingness to yield its own judgment or opinion, which is seen to be false from many solid arguments.

V. Docility is a virtue which investigates the reasons of those opinions which are true; readily yields and assents to those who teach or show things which are better, and that for reasons sound and convincing; and at the same time disposes the will to fall in with and assent to those reasons which are true and satisfactory, and to abandon what was before received and entertained. The *extremes* of this virtue are the same as those of constancy. Docility is also necessary to constancy; for constancy, without docility, would degenerate into obstinacy; and docility, without constancy, would degenerate into fickleness and inconstancy.

The virtues which we have thus far enumerated under this commandment are naturally and closely connected together: for it is necessary that truth should be tempered and regulated by simplicity and candor; that it

should be perceived and acknowledged by docility, and preserved by candor. In this way the preceding virtues are necessary to the existence of truth. The three following virtues are necessary, in order that it may be profitable in the world:

VI. Taciturnity, or a discreet observance of silence, is a virtue which keeps to itself things not known and not necessary to be told, where, when, and in as far as it is proper to do so, and at the same time avoids an immoderate use of the tongue, in uttering such things as prudence would require not to be told. Or, it is such a profession of the truth as that which keeps to itself things that are secret, whether true or false, and which avoids conversation that is unnecessary and useless — especially that which is untimely, baneful, and calculated to give offence. The extremes of this virtue are, on the one side, gossiping, foolish talking, and treachery. *Gossiping* or *prattling* is not to be able to retain anything, even things which should be kept secret. *Foolish talking* is to speak unseasonably, immoderately, and foolishly. *Treachery* is to betray honest enterprises and plans, to the injury of those whose friend the betrayer seems, and ought to be; and not to defend, nor have any regard to the danger of another, when it is proper and possible to do so; and still further, to relate things not worthy of being told, the narration of which is an injury to him to whom it is told, and to disclose such things as must necessarily be spoken with no good intention or design; and lastly, to utter anything by perjury or falsehood. That which is opposed to this virtue, as it respects the extreme of excess, may be included in moroseness and undue reservedness. *Moroseness* consists in being silent and keeping back the truth when it ought to be declared. Wenn man einem die Worte muß abkaufen. *Undue reservedness* is to dissemble the truth, where the glory of God and the salvation of our fellow-men require a profession of it.

VII. Affability, or readiness of speaking, is a virtue which hears, answers, and speaks willingly, and with evidence of good will, where it is proper by reason of some necessary or probable cause: or it is a virtue which makes others feel easy in their interviews with those who are possessed of this grace, and at the same time gives evidence of good-will in conversation, speech and gesture; or it is a virtue which consists in hearing and answering with a declaration and evidence of good-will. The extremes are the same as those of the last named virtue. Taciturnity, without affability, becomes moroseness or peevishness; whilst affability, without taciturnity, degenerates into gossipping, prattling, and foolish talking.

VIII. *Urbanity*, being that which seasons and recommends truth and speech under every form, is the truth figuratively spoken, for the purpose of moving, exhorting, and delighting others, having a proper regard to the circumstances of the persons, time and place; or it is a facility and power of speaking the truth with a certain degree of grace, so as to teach, comfort, cheer, excite and move others without being accompanied with any unpleasantness or bitterness. The extremes of this virtue are, on the one side, scurrility, raillery, and backbiting. *Scurrility* consists in obscene and low jesting, especially in holy things. *Scurra*, which means a person who jests in the manner just described, is so called from the Greek σκωρ, which means filth; because he speaks what is obscene and filthy. *Raillery* is a vice which consists in bitter jesting or scoffing, and in deriding and vexing others, especially those who ought to be pitied. *Backbiting* is that

which puts false reports into circulation in regard to others, and puts the worst construction upon what is spoken doubtfully, with a desire of revenge, and of injuring, and exciting prejudice and opposition against some one. Foolishness, and a want of taste, constitute the other extreme of urbanity. *Foolishness* is an affectation of urbanity which is altogether inappropriate and out of place; whilst a *want of taste* shows itself in a silly imitation of urbanity.

FORTY-FOURTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 113. What doth the tenth commandment require of us?

Answer. That even the smallest inclination, or thought, contrary to any of God's commands, never rise in our hearts; but that at all times we hate sin with our whole hearts, and delight in all righteousness.

EXPOSITION.

That this commandment, which has respect to lust, or concupiscence, is one, and not two, is evident —

1. From the fact that Moses repeats it in a different order in Ex. 20: 17, and Deut. 5: 21, as we have already shown.

2. From the fact that Moses comprehends it in one verse in both of the places to which we have just referred.

3. From the interpretation of Paul, who comprises in one commandment all that Moses says in relation to this subject, when he says, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." (Rom. 7: 7.)

4. From the fact that the Papists and others are accustomed, in their expositions of this part of the Decalogue, to join together the coveting of our neighbor's house and wife; because they, without doubt, perceived that the coveting of our neighbor's wife, house, and all other things which belong to our neighbor, are here forbidden, for one and the same reason. It follows, therefore, either that there is but one precept touching concupiscence, or that there must be as many commandments enumerated, as there are things belonging to our neighbor which we are forbidden to covet.

5. From the authority of the best ancient writers, both among the Jews and Christians, to whom we have referred in our remarks upon the division of the Decalogue.

The design and end of this commandment is the internal obedience and regulation of all our affections towards God, and our neighbor and his goods, which must also be included in all the other commandments. Should some one object and say, Therefore this commandment is superfluous, inasmuch as it requires nothing new, or which has not been expressed in the foregoing precepts; we reply, that it is not superfluous, seeing that it is added to the other commandments, as a general rule and interpretation, according to which the internal obedience of all the other commandments must be understood, because this is spoken of the whole Decalogue generally. This commandment, therefore, enjoins *original righteousness* towards God and our neighbor, which consists in a true knowledge of God in the mind, with

an inclination in the will to obey the will of God as known. It also forbids *concupiscence*, which is an inordinate desire or corrupt inclination, coveting those things which God has forbidden. It properly, however, commands *original* righteousness towards our neighbor, which is a desire and inclination to perform towards our neighbor all the duties which are required from us, and to preserve and defend his safety. There are *two extremes* of this original righteousness here forbidden: 1. *Original sin* towards our neighbor, which is called *concupiscence*, which consists in desiring and wishing those things, which would be an injury to our neighbor; 2. *An inordinate love of our neighbor*, which leads to the neglect of God for his sake.

There are some who hold that concupiscence and original sin are one and the same thing; but they differ in the same way in which an effect differs from a cause, or as a part of a thing differs from the whole. Concupiscence is a propensity to those things which are prohibited by the divine law. Original sin is the state of condemnation in which the whole human race has become involved by the fall, and a want of the knowledge and will of God.

We must here observe, that not only are corrupt and disordered inclinations sins, but the thinking of evil, in as far as it is connected with an inclination and propensity to pursue it, or with a desire to practice it, is sin. Concupiscence, although it is without doubt born in us, is both an evil and sin; for we are not to judge according to nature, but according to the law whether a thing be sin or not. Whatever is opposed to the law is sin, whether it be born in us, or not.

The Pelagians denied that concupiscence is sin. The law, on the contrary, declares, *Thou shalt not covet*. And Paul says, "I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." (Rom. 7: 7.) The Pelagians were condemned in many councils, which were called together on account of the errors of Pelagius and Celestius, about the year of our Lord 420, and subsequently.

The principal Arguments of the Pelagians.

Obj. 1. Natural things are not sins. Concupiscence is natural. Therefore it is no sin. Ans. There is here a fallacy of the accident in the minor proposition; for inordinate concupiscence was not before the fall, but became joined to our nature after the fall. It is therefore not natural in itself, but is by an accident, inasmuch as it is now, since the fall, born with us; or it is natural in this sense, that it is an evil accident connecting itself inseparably with a nature good in itself. Or we may reply to the objection thus: there are four terms in this syllogism arising from the ambiguity of the word *natural*. In the major it signifies a thing created good by God naturally; viz., a natural desire of man before the fall, which was not contrary to the will of God. But in the minor it signifies a thing which does not properly belong to us by creation, but which we have brought upon ourselves by the fall.

To this it is objected: a natural desire or inclination which works those things which contribute to the preservation of man, and avoids those which are injurious, is not sinful, even though it belongs to a corrupt nature, because it is created by God, and is a desire good in itself. Such, now, is concupiscence. Therefore, it is no sin. Ans. We reply to the major

proposition, that appetites and desires are good in themselves, in as far as they are mere desires. It is different, however, with those desires which are inordinate, and which are directed upon objects prohibited by God, as is the case with all the appetites and desires of our corrupt nature; because, they are either not directed upon such objects as they ought, or not in the manner and with the design with which they should be, so that they are all corrupt and sinful. "An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit." (Matt. 7: 18.) To desire the fruit of a tree was natural; but to desire it contrary to the express command of God, as Eve did, was in its own nature wicked and sinful.

Obj. 2. That which it is impossible for us to produce in ourselves, or to prevent, is no sin. Concupiscence, now, is in us in such a way that we can neither throw it off, nor produce it in ourselves. Therefore, it is no sin. Ans. The major proposition is false: for sin is not to be estimated by any liberty or necessity of our nature, but by the law and will of God. Whatever is in opposition to the law is sin, whether men have power to avoid it or not. Nor does God do any injustice to us by requiring from us that which we cannot perform; because he demanded these things of us when they were possible, and gave us the power to perform them. And although we have now lost this power, yet God has not lost his right to demand what he committed to our trust. For further remarks upon this subject, we would refer the reader to what has been said in the exposition of the ninth Question of the Catechism, page 66.

Obj. 3. Sin renders man obnoxious to the eternal wrath of God. Concupiscence does not expose those who are regenerated to the wrath of God: for there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8: 1.) Therefore, concupiscence is no sin, at least not in the regenerate. Ans. There is a fallacy of accident in the minor proposition; for that concupiscence does not condemn the regenerate, comes to pass by an accident, which is the grace of God, which does not impute it to the faithful. This, however, does not occur in this way, as though concupiscence were no sin; for other sins in like manner do not condemn the regenerate, not because they are no sins, but because they have obtained the pardon of them through Christ.

Obj. 4. Original sin is removed in baptism. Therefore, concupiscence is no sin in those who are baptized. We reply to the antecedent, that original sin is not simply and wholly removed in baptism; but merely as it respects its guilt. Corruption and an inclination to sin remain still in those who are baptized. This is what the Schoolmen mean, when they say, *The formal part of sin is removed, but the material remains.* Should any one reply, that where the formal part of sin is removed, there the thing itself is removed, inasmuch as the form gives being to the thing; so that original sin itself must be removed in baptism; we answer, that there is here an error in understanding that to be spoken generally, which is true only in a certain respect. The formal part of sin is removed, not simply, but in respect to the guilt of sin; for the formal part of sin is two-fold, and includes, 1. Opposition to the law, and an inclination to sin. 2. Guilt, or desert of punishment. The guilt of sin is removed, but the inclination remains. "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind." (Rom. 7: 23.)

Question 114. But can those who are converted to God, perfectly keep these commands?

Answer. No; but even the holiest men, while in this life, have only small beginnings of this obedience, yet so, that with a sincere resolution, they begin to live, not only according to some, but all the commands of God.

EXPOSITION.

The question which here claims our attention is, *How is obedience to the law possible, and can those who are regenerated keep the law perfectly?* which is the seventh division proposed under the general subject of the law of God. That this question may be the better understood, we shall distinguish the nature of man as it was when it first came from the hands of God, pure and holy — as fallen, and as regenerated.

Perfect obedience to the whole law, was possible to the nature of man before it was corrupted by sin, and that as it respects every part and degree of obedience, as it is to the angels; for man was created good, and after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness.

The nature of man in its corrupt state since the fall, is entirely unable to fulfill what the law demands; yea, it cannot so much as commence acceptable obedience to God, according to the following declarations of Scripture: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit." "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." "Ye were dead in trespasses and sins; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." (Gen. 8: 21. Jer. 13: 23. Matt. 7: 18. Rom. 4: 23. Eph. 2: 13. 2 Cor. 3: 5.)

The obedience of the law is possible in the regenerate, 1. As touching external propriety and discipline. 2. As it respects the imputation of Christ's righteousness, or by the benefit of justification and regeneration, which we obtain by faith. 3. As it respects the commencement of internal and external obedience in this life. "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5: 3.) He that boasts that he knows and worships God, without the commencement of obedience, or regeneration, is a liar.

But the law is impossible to the regenerate in respect to God, or the perfect internal and external obedience which it requires. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." (Ps. 143: 2.) 1. Because the regenerate do not fulfill the law perfectly, but do many things in opposition to it. 2. Because even those things which they do according to the law, are imperfect; for there are still many sins remaining in the regenerate, as original sin, and many actual sins, neglects, omissions and infirmities, which sins the godly acknowledge and bewail in themselves. "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (Is. 64: 6.)

There is, however, a great difference between the regenerate and the unregenerate when they sin. 1. God has a purpose to save the regenerate. 2. There is a certain final repentance on the part of the regenerate. 3. Even with the sins of the regenerate there is always remaining some

beginning, or seed of true faith and conversion. It is different, however, as it respects the unregenerate; for in regard to them God has no purpose as in the case of the godly, neither is there any certain final repentance in their case, nor any beginning of new obedience; but they sin willingly and persist in their opposition to God, and at length perish, unless they are converted.

Objections against the imperfection of works in the regenerate.

Obj. 1. The works of the Holy Spirit cannot be imperfect. The good works of the regenerate are the works of the Holy Spirit. Therefore it must needs be that they are perfect, considered even in themselves. Ans. There is here an error in regarding that to be absolutely true which is true only in a certain respect. Those works which are wrought simply by the Holy Spirit must needs be pure and perfect. But the good works of the regenerate are of the Holy Spirit, not absolutely, but in such a way that they are at the same time the works of the regenerate themselves. Hence this is all that follows, that the works of the saints are pure in as far as they are suggested and wrought by the Holy Spirit, but in as far as they are also of men, who are as yet imperfect and fallible, they are works accompanied with many defects and with much that is evil.

Obj. 2. The works of those who are conformed to the image of Christ cannot be imperfect. The saints are in this life conformed to Christ by their regeneration and adoption into the family of God. Therefore their works cannot be imperfect. Ans. There is here the same error which we noticed in replying to the former objection. The major proposition is spoken in reference to those who are perfectly conformed to the image of Christ, whilst the saints, of whom the minor proposition speaks, are conformed to Christ only in part as long as they continue on earth. For as our knowledge is, so is our love and conformity with Christ. But here we know only in part, and prophesy only in part, as the Apostle says. Hence our conformity with Christ is not perfect.

Obj. 3. There is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 8: 1.) The saints are in Christ. Therefore their works are perfectly good, considered even in themselves. Ans. There is here a fallacy in regarding that as a cause which is none; for it is not the perfection of the works of the regenerate, but the satisfaction of Christ imputed to them by faith, which is the cause on account of which there is no condemnation to them. Hence this is all that follows, that the works of the regenerate are perfect, either in themselves or in respect to the satisfaction of Christ imputed to them, and not condemned as impure in the judgment of God.

Obj. 4. The severity of divine justice does not render good according to works which are not perfectly good. But Christ in the final judgment will render to every one, and so to the saints also, according to their works. Therefore the works of the saints are so perfect that they will in themselves stand in the judgment of God. Ans. There are here four terms; because the major must be understood of a legal reward of works, whilst the minor must be understood of a reward that is evangelical; or to express it differently, we may say that the justice of God does not render good according to works which are imperfect, if he judges according to the covenant of perfect obedience to the law. But Christ, in rewarding the works of the

saints, will not judge according to the covenant of perfect works, but according to the covenant of faith, or of his own righteousness imputed and applied to them by faith; and yet he will judge them according to their works, as according to the evidences of their faith, from which their works have proceeded, and which they, as the fruits of this faith, declare to be in them.

Obj. 5. The Scriptures attribute perfection to the works of the saints. "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart." "With my whole heart have I sought thee." "Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." "The heart of Asa was perfect all his days." (Ps. 119: 1, 10. Gen. 6: 9. 2 Chron. 15: 17.) Testimonies of a similar character are found in every part of the Scriptures. Therefore the works of the saints are perfect. Ans. These and similar declarations of Scripture speak of that perfection which consists in parts, of true sincerity as opposed to hypocrisy, and a feigning of piety, and not of that perfection which consists in the degrees of obedience which the saints ought to render to God. For the saints do not in this life attain to that degree of perfect obedience which the law requires; yet they, nevertheless, have the commencement of perfect obedience to the divine law, and of subjection to God, according to all his commandments. And although there is much hypocrisy and sin still remaining even in the most holy, as it is said, let every man be a liar (Rom. 3: 4), yet there is notwithstanding a great difference between those who are altogether hypocrites, whose hypocrisy is pleasing to themselves, having no commencement or sense of true piety in their hearts, and those who, acknowledging and lamenting the remains of hypocrisy in themselves, have at the same time the commencement of true faith and conversion to God. The former are condemned of God, whilst the latter are received into favor, not on account of this commencement of obedience which is in them, but on account of the perfect obedience of Christ imputed unto them. We must therefore add, that those who are converted are perfect in the sight of God, not only as it respects the parts of true piety which are all begun in them, but also in the degrees of the true and perfect righteousness of Christ imputed unto them, as it is said, "Ye are complete in him." "Christ is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." (Col. 2: 10. 1 Cor. 1: 30.)

But, say our opponents, the Scriptures also attribute the perfection of degrees to the saints, as when it is said, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect." "Be not children in understanding." "Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Cor. 2: 6; 14: 20. Eph. 4: 13.) But these and similar declarations of Scripture, do not mean by the term perfect, such as are absolutely or wholly conformable to the law, but such as have more knowledge, assurance and readiness (confirmed by exercise) to obey God, resist carnal desires, and to bear the cross, than others who are not so fully confirmed and established in the principles of piety. For so this perfection is elsewhere explained, where it is said, "That we be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine." "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, that I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." "To will is present with me, but how to perform that

which is good, I find not." (Eph. 4 : 13. Phil. 3 : 12. Rom. 7 : 18.) Hence this perfection is relative, having respect, not to the divine law, but to such as are weaker and less confirmed in the faith of the gospel.

It is also proper that we should here refer to the passage found in 1 John 4 : 17, 18, which our adversaries are wont to bring forward against what we have just said : "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment ; because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love ; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." But John does not mean that our love to God, but his love to us, is perfect, that is, fully expressed and made known unto us by the effects or benefits which God has bestowed upon us in Christ ; as Paul declares in the fifth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, that *the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us*, is the cause why we look for the day of judgment without fear and with assurance ; and that we are assured of this love and mercy of God by this sign or testimony, because we are in this life conformed to his image by the Holy Spirit. For we are assured of our justification by our regeneration, not as by the cause of the effect, but as by the effect of the cause. And although regeneration is not perfect in this life, yet, if it be indeed begun, it is sufficient to confirm the truth of our faith to our consciences. And indeed that which John adds, when he says, *Love casteth out fear*, is a proof that love is not as yet perfect in us, because we are not in this life perfectly delivered from fear of the wrath and judgment of God, and of eternal punishment. For the fear and love of God, which are contrary to each other, are here in small degrees in the saints at the same time, their fear decreasing, and their love and comfort or joy in God increasing, until joy gains a complete triumph, and perfectly casts out all agitation and fear in the life to come, when God shall wipe away every tear.

Obj. 6. David says, "I have not declined from thy law." "I have kept thy law." "I have done judgment and justice." "Judge me according to my righteousness." (Ps. 119: 50, 51, 121 ; 7 : 8.) Therefore the regenerate may declare their good works in the judgment, as being perfectly conformable to the divine law. Ans. These and similar declarations do not claim for the saints absolute conformity to the law in this life, or else they would contradict those passages which speak of the imperfection of the righteous already referred to, but of the righteousness of a good conscience without which faith cannot stand, just as a good conscience cannot be without faith, as it is said : "That thou by them mightest war a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience ; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck." (1 Tim. 1 : 18, 19.) The saints now do not dread to come before the tribunal of God, and comfort themselves with a consciousness of having acted correctly, not, indeed, because they would oppose this to the judgment of God, or because they are conscious of no sin, (for they exclaim in view of their sins, "O Lord enter not into judgment with thy servant : if thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities who shall stand") but because they have a sincere, and not a hypocritical, desire to obey God, and have the full assurance that their sins are covered and washed away by the blood of Christ, and that the obedience which is begun in them is pleasing to God for Christ's sake, and that they shall be graciously rewarded by Christ according to the promises of the gospel.

Obj. 7. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (1 John 3: 9.) Therefore new obedience in the saints is perfect and without sin. Ans. But this is to misunderstand the figure of speech which is here used. Not to commit sin, is not, according to John, to be without sin, (for this he had taught in the first and second chapters of this same Epistle, does not take place, even in the most holy) but it is not to have reigning sin, nor to persevere in it, which is not inconsistent with true faith and piety in the saints.

Question 115. Why will God then have the ten commands so strictly preached, since no man in this life can keep them?

Answer. First, that all our lifetime, we may learn more and more to know our sinful nature, and thus become the more earnest in seeking the remission of sin, and righteousness in Christ; likewise, that we constantly endeavour and pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we may become more and more conformable to the image of God, until we arrive at the perfection proposed to us, in a life to come.

EXPOSITION.

When we enquire concerning the use of the divine law, it is necessary that we should keep in view the differences of each part of the law.

The use of the *ceremonial laws* of Moses was,

1. *That it might serve as a schoolmaster* to bring us to Christ and his kingdom. "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith." (Gal. 3: 24.)

2. *That it might distinguish* the Jewish church from all other nations.

3. *That it might be an exercise of piety, and a declaration* of obedience to the moral law.

4. *A confirmation of faith.* There were among the ceremonial laws certain sacraments, or signs of the covenant, and seals of grace; as circumcision, and the Passover, which declared what benefits God would give to the faithful by the Messiah which was to come

The use of the *judicial, or civil laws*, was,

1. That they might contribute to the preservation of the Mosaic polity.

2. That they might be types of the government of the church in the kingdom of Christ, inasmuch as the princes and kings of the Jewish nation were no less, than the priests a type of Christ, the High Priest and King of the Church. These uses, together with the laws themselves, were done away with when the ceremonies of the former dispensation were fulfilled and abrogated by the coming of Christ, and the Mosaic polity overthrown by the Romans.

The uses of the moral law are different according to man's four-fold state.

I. *In nature uncorrupted*, or not as yet depraved by sin, as our nature was before the fall, there are two principal uses of the divine law:

1. *The entire and perfect conformity of man with God.* The mind of man before the fall possessed a perfect knowledge of the law, which produced a conformity and correspondence of all the inclinations and actions with the will of God.

2. *A good conscience*, or a consciousness of the divine favor, and certain hope of eternal life. The law, according to the order of divine justice, promises life to those who render a perfect obedience to its requirements. "Which if a man do, he shall live in them." (Lev. 18: 5.)

II. *In nature corrupted*, and not as yet renewed by the Holy Spirit, there are also two uses of the law:

1. The preservation of discipline and external propriety in the church and world. The law being engraven upon the minds and hearts of all men by God himself, and speaking by the voice of ministers and magistrates, curbs and restrains even the unregenerate, so that they shun those flagrant and open forms of wickedness, which are in opposition to the judgment of sound reason as it utters itself even in persons unrenewed by the Spirit of God, and which must be removed before regeneration. "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature, the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another." (Rom. 2: 14, 15.)

2. *The knowledge of sin.* The law accuses, convinces, and condemns all those who are not regenerated, because they are unrighteous before God, and subject to eternal condemnation. "We know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." "I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. (Rom. 3: 19, 20; 7: 7.) This use of the law, which consists in a knowledge of sin, and of the judgment of God against sin, produces in itself in the unregenerate hatred of God, and an increase of sin, and if they are reprobate it drives them into despair, as it is said, "The law worketh wrath." "Sin taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead." (Rom. 4: 15; 7: 8.) This knowledge of sin, however, is by an accident a preparation to conversion as it respects the elect, seeing that God by this means leads and constrains them to acknowledge their unrighteousness, to despair of any help in themselves, and to seek by faith righteousness and life in Christ the mediator. "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." (Gal. 3: 21, 22.)

III. *In nature restored by Christ*, or as it respects the regenerate, there are many uses of the law.

1. *The preservation of discipline and outward obedience to the law.* For although this use has respect chiefly to the unregenerate, as we have already shown, who do not refrain from sin from love to God and righteousness, but only from a fear and dread of punishment and shame, as the Poet says,

> *Oderunt peccare mali formedine pœnæ:*
> They hate to sin from a dread of punishment;

yet it in like manner has its use in relation to the godly, because on account

of the weakness and corruption of the flesh, it is useful and necessary, even to them, that the threatenings of the law, and the examples of punishment set before them, may keep them in the faithful discharge of their duty. For God threatens severe punishment even to the saints, if they become guilty of sins of a shameful and grievous nature. "When the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall die in his sins." (Ez. 18: 24.)

2. *A knowledge of sin.* This use of the law, although it likewise has reference chiefly to the unregenerate, nevertheless, belongs to the godly also. For the law is to the regenerate as a mirror, in which they may see the defects and imperfection of their own nature, and also leads them to true humility before God, that so they may continually advance in true conversion and faith; and that whilst the renewing of their nature is going forward, they may become more earnest in prayer and supplication, that they may become more and more conformed to God and the divine law. "I delight in the law of God, after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 23: 22, 23, 24.) The declaration of the Apostle Paul, that *the law is our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ*, must be understood of both these uses of the law of which we have just spoken, and that in the elect still unregenerate, as well as in those who are already regenerated. To the former it is a preparation to conversion; whilst to the latter it is the carrying forward, or increase of conversion, since faith cannot be kindled, or remain in the heart, unless open and grievous offences, and such as wound the conscience, be hated and shunned. "Let no man deceive you; he that committeth sin is of the devil." (I John 3: 7.)

3. Another use of the moral law is, that it may be a *rule of divine worship and of a Christian life.* "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and cause you to walk in my statutes." (Ps. 119: 105. Jer. 31: 33. Ez. 36: 26.) This use of the law is peculiar to the regenerate. For although the law be also a rule of life to the unregenerate before their conversion, yet it is not to them a rule of worship and gratitude to God, as in the case of the regenerate.

4. *That the exposition of the law* delivered to the church may teach that God is, and what he is.

5. *The voice of the law* sounding in the church is an evident testimony, teaching what the true church is, and in what true religion consists. It is in the church alone that the law is delivered and taught in its purity, and rightly understood; for all other systems of religion have manifestly corrupted it in different ways, by approving of manifest errors and heresies which they have mingled more or less with it.

6. *It admonishes* us of the image of God in man; or, we may say it is a testimony of the excellency of human nature before the fall, and of the original righteousness which was in Adam, and is again restored in us by Christ.

7. *It is a testimony* of eternal life, still future, in which we shall perfectly fulfill the law. The law was given, to be observed by man. But it is not observed in this life. Therefore there is another life remaining, in which we shall yield a perfect obedience to the law.

IV. *In nature* perfectly restored and glorified after this life, the law will also have its use; for although the preaching of it, and the whole ministry of the church, shall then cease, yet there will still remain in the elect a knowledge of the law, whilst perfect obedience to all its demands, and full conformity with God, will be wrought in them. The law will, therefore, accomplish the same ends in the life to come, when we shall be fully transformed in the image of God, that it did in our nature before the fall.

The principal arguments of the Antinomians, Libertines, and other profane heretics of a similar cast, who affirm that the law is not to be taught in the church of Christ.

Obj. 1. That which cannot be kept, is taught to no purpose. The law cannot be kept. Therefore it is to no purpose that it is taught in the church of Christ. Ans. There is here a fallacy in urging that as a cause, which is no sufficient reason; for the mere fact that it is impossible for us to render perfect obedience to the law in this infirm state of our being, is not of itself a sufficient reason why the preaching of the law should be regarded as useless in the church, since there may be, and indeed are, other reasons why it is not only useful, but even necessary, to teach and enforce the law; for we have already shown that the law accomplishes many objects, even in respect to the regenerate. It is not necessary, therefore, that when one end or use of the law is removed, that the others should likewise be removed. If it cannot be perfectly obeyed, it should at least be taught and enforced, that we may be led to acknowledge this imperfection and defect, in order that we may the more ardently desire and seek the remission of our sins, and that righteousness which is in Christ, and may the more earnestly strive to reach and attain the mark set before us — even our perfection in Christ. We may also reply to this objection, that it is of no force, inasmuch as it assumes that to be true generally which is true only in part; for the law may, to a certain extent, be kept by the regenerate, as we have just shown. Hence, the minor proposition, if it be understood generally, is not true.

Obj. 2. He who commands impossibilities, commands things which are not profitable. God commands impossibilities in his law. Therefore he commands things which are useless, and so by consequence the law itself is of no use. Ans. This argument is nearly the same as the one we have just answered. We reply, however, to the major proposition, That he commands things unprofitable, who commands impossibilities: 1. If the things enjoined be absolutely impossible. 2. If they be always impossible. 3. If the command have no other objects than that the things which are enjoined be perfectly complied with. But there are many ends on account of which God commands and enforces the law, and requires that it be taught in the church, as may be seen from the remarks which we have already made upon this subject. There is also here the same error which we noticed in the former objection, in regarding that as a cause which is no sufficient reason.

Obj. 3. We ought not to desire that which God does not desire to give us in this life, and which we cannot obtain. But God does not desire to give us perfect obedience to the law in this life. Therefore it is in vain that we desire it, and strive for it by the doctrine of the law. Ans. We ought

not to desire that which God does not desire to give us, unless he commands us to desire it, and there be weighty reasons why we should seek to obtain it. But God commands us to seek and to desire the perfect fulfillment of the law in this life, and that: 1. Because he purposes at length to accomplish it in those who desire it, and to grant it to us after this life, if we here truly and heartily desire it. 2. That we may here make progress in true piety, and that the desire to conform our lives to the requirements of the divine law be daily more and more kindled and confirmed in us. 3. That God may, by this desire of fulfilling the law, exercise in us repentance and obedience.

Obj. 4. Christ is not the lawgiver. Therefore his ministers should not teach and enforce the law. Ans. Christ is not the lawgiver, as it respects the principal office of the mediator; but he was and is lawgiver: 1. In as far as he is God and the author of the law, together with the Father. 2. In as far as it belonged to the mediator to free the law from the errors with which it had been corrupted, and to restore its true sense, not indeed chiefly, but that he might be able to accomplish the principal parts of his office, which are comprehended in the reconciliation and salvation of the human race. We may give the same answer to the objection as it relates to the *ministers of the gospel*, inasmuch as they are to teach and expound no other doctrine to the church than that which Christ himself delivered.

Obj. 5. He who makes satisfaction to the law by punishment, is not bound to obedience according to the rule, *The law binds to obedience or punishment, but not to both at the same time.* We now make satisfaction to the law by the punishment of Christ. Therefore we are no longer bound to obey the law. Ans. We must make a distinction in reference to the major proposition: He who makes satisfaction by punishment, is not bound to obedience; that is, he is not bound to render the same obedience, for the omission of which he suffered punishment; but after it is made, he is bound to yield obedience anew to the law, or to suffer new punishment in case he disobey the law. Again: he who makes satisfaction to the law by punishment which is not his own, but another's, and is received into favor by God without his own satisfaction, ought still to render obedience to the law, even though it be not to make satisfaction for his sins, but that he may in this way show his gratitude to his redeemer. We ought, therefore, since Christ has satisfied for our sins by his death, to feel ourselves bound to render obedience, not indeed for the time past, but for the time to come; and this, too, for the purpose of showing our gratitude for the benefit of our deliverance. "He that is dead is freed from sin." "We thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (Rom. 6: 7. 2 Cor. 5: 14, 15.)

Obj. 6. Christians are not governed by the law, but by the Spirit of regeneration, according as it is said, "The law is not made for a righteous man." (1 Tim. 1: 9.) Therefore, the law ought not to be taught among Christians. Ans. Christians are, indeed, not governed by the law; or in other words, they are not constrained and driven to such a course of conduct as is right and becoming by the law, and by fear of punishment as the ungodly are; yet they are, nevertheless, ruled in this sense by the law, that it teaches them what worship is pleasing to God; and the Holy Ghost, likewise, uses the doctrine of the law, for the purpose of inclining them to

true and cheerful obedience. The doctrine, therefore, that we are bound to give obedience to the law remains, although there is no condemnation or constraint, as far as Christians are concerned. For to this we are bound, that our obedience be most free and cheerful. We are debtors not to the flesh to live after the flesh, but to the Spirit. The law is not given for a righteous man, that is, to constrain and bind him. (Rom. 8: 12. 1 Tim. 1: 9.)

Obj. 7. "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. 6: 14.) Therefore, the law does not bind us. Ans. This, however, is to misunderstand the words of the Apostle; for the expression, *Not to be under the law*, does not mean, that we are not to yield obedience to the law, but that we are freed from the curse and constraint of the law; just as, *To be under grace*, is to be justified and regenerated by the grace of Christ. But say our opponents: Those who are bound to obey the law, and yet do not comply with its demands, are subject to condemnation. But we are not exposed to condemnation; for "there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8: 1.) Therefore, we are not bound to obey the law. We reply that the major of this syllogism is true, 1. In case he who is bound to yield obedience to the law, be bound to yield it in his own person; but we are bound to yield obedience and do yield it, not in ourselves, but in Christ. 2. In case he be bound to obey the law in himself *always*, or at all times perfectly; but we are not bound in ourselves to yield perfect obedience to the law in this life, but only to begin this obedience according to all the commandments of God. In eternal life we shall be bound to a perfect conformity to the law.

Obj. 8. The law is the letter which killeth, and is the ministration of death and condemnation. (2 Cor. 3: 6, 7.) But there is no condemnation to Christians. Therefore, the law does not have respect to Christians who are in Christ Jesus. Ans. There is here a fallacy of accident; for the law is not in itself the letter which killeth; since this comes to pass by the fault of men, who, the more clearly they perceive the difference between themselves and the law, the more fully do they give themselves over to despair in reference to their salvation, and are therefore slain by the law. Again, the law alone, without the gospel, is the letter, that is, it is the doctrine which merely teaches, demands obedience, denounces the wrath of God and death to such as are disobedient, without producing the spiritual obedience which it requires. But when it is joined with the gospel, which is the Spirit, it also commences to become the Spirit, which is effectual in the godly, inasmuch as those who are regenerated commence willingly and cheerfully to yield obedience to the law. The law, therefore, *is the letter*, 1. By itself and without the gospel. 2. In respect to those who are unregenerated. On the other hand, *the gospel is the Spirit;* that is, it is the ministration and means through which the Holy Ghost, which works spiritual obedience in us, is given; not indeed as though all who hear, would receive the Holy Ghost and be regenerated, but because faith, by which our hearts are quickened, so that they begin to yield obedience to the law, is received by it. It does not follow, therefore, that the law is no longer to be taught in the church; for Christ himself says: "I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it." (Matt. 5: 17.) And Paul also says, that we establish the law through faith. (Rom. 3: 31.) Christ fulfilled the law in two respects: *by obedience and suffering.* He was just and holy in himself and did

not violate the law in a single instance, but partly performed in our behalf those things which he was not bound to do, and partly sustained the punishment of the law. He also fulfills the law *in us in two ways*, by teaching it and granting unto us his Spirit, that so we may commence obedience to it, as we proved when speaking of the abrogation of the law.

Obj. 9. That is not to be taught in the church which increases sin. The law increases sin. (Rom. 7 : 8.) Therefore, it is not to be taught. Ans. There is here a fallacy of accident in the minor proposition. The law increases sin by an accident, or on account of the corruption of man, and that in two ways. *First*, because the nature of man is so depraved and alienated from God, that men do not perform what they know to be pleasing to God; and, on the other hand, what they know to be prohibited by God, that they desire, and do with the greatest willingness. *Secondly*, because it works wrath, when men fret and murmur against God, hate and turn away from him, and rush into despair according as the law reveals to them a knowledge of their sins, and the punishment which they deserve in consequence thereof. The law in itself produces righteousness, conformity with God, love to God, &c. The law also in itself increases sin, if we understand the word *increase* in a different sense, viz., that it shows unto us, and brings it to pass that we acknowledge the greatness and magnitude of our sins; but not that it so increases sin as that that which in itself is small is made greater and more aggravated. There are, therefore, four terms in this syllogism, in consequence of the ambiguity of the word *increase* in the minor proposition.

Obj. 10. The law is not necessary to salvation. Therefore, it should not be taught in the church. Ans. But even though the doctrine of the law is not necessary in order that we may be saved by obedience to it, yet it is, nevertheless, necessary on account of other causes, as has been already proven.

Obj. 11. We have all things in Christ according to what is said: "And of his fullness have all we received." "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." "And ye are complete in him." (John 1 : 16. Col. 2 : 3, 10.) Therefore, we must not go back from Christ to Moses, nor is there any need of the law in the church of Christ. Ans. There is here a fallacy of the consequent, which proceeds from a statement of the whole to a denial of a part. The whole wisdom and knowledge, or doctrine which has been delivered unto us by Christ, is sufficient and necessary for the church. But the moral law is also a part of this doctrine, because Christ does not only command that faith, but that repentance also should be preached in his name. Hence, the doctrine of the law is not excluded from the perfect wisdom which we have in Christ, but is rather included in it.

FORTY-FIFTH LORD'S DAY.

OF PRAYER.

Question 116. Why is prayer necessary for Christians?

Answer. Because it is that chief part of thankfulness which God requires of us; and also, because God will give his grace and Holy Spirit to those only, who with sincere desires continually ask them of him, and are thankful for them.

EXPOSITION.

There are many questions which may be agitated in reference to prayer, the chief and most important of which are the following:

I. *What is prayer?*
II. *Why is it necessary?*
III. *What are the things necessary to acceptable prayer*
IV. *What is the form of prayer prescribed by Christ?*

The first and second of these propositions belong to this 116th Question of the Catechism; the third to the 117th; and the fourth to the 118th Question.

I. What is Prayer?

Prayer consists in calling upon the true God, and arises from an acknowledgment and sense of our want, and from a desire of sharing in the divine bounty, in true conversion of heart and confidence in the promise of grace for the sake of Christ the mediator, asking at the hands of God such temporal and spiritual blessings as are necessary for us; or in giving thanks to God for the benefits received. *The genus* or general character of prayer consists in invocation or adoration. Adoration is often used in the sense of the whole worship of God, since we regard him as the true God, whom we worship. *Prayer* is a species or part of invocation, for to call upon the true God is to ask of him such things as are necessary both for soul and body, and to render thanks to him for benefits received. It is here used in the sense of the general character of pray. There are, therefore, two species or parts comprehended in prayer—petition and thanksgiving. *Petition* is a prayer asking of God those blessings necessary both for the soul and body. *Thanksgiving* is prayer acknowledging and magnifying the benefits received from God, and binding those who receive these gifts to such gratitude as is pleasing to God. *Thankfulness in general* consists in acknowledging and professing what and how great is the benefit received, and in binding those who are the recipients thereof to the performance of such duties as are mutual, possible and becoming. It comprehends, therefore, truth and justice.

The apostle Paul, in his first Epistle to Timothy, 2: 1, enumerates four species of prayer, saying, "I exhort, therefore, that first of all supplication, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." The first includes prayers against evil things; the second, petitions for good things; the third, intercession for others; and the fourth, thanksgiving for benefits received and evils warded off. This distinction is drawn from the end or design of prayer.

Prayer is also distinguished into public and private prayer, from the circumstances of person and place. *Private prayer* is the intercourse which a faithful soul has with God, asking, alone and apart from others, certain blessings for himself, or for others; or giving thanks for benefits received. This form of prayer is not restricted to any particular words or places, for oftentimes the heart, when burdened and distressed, gives utterance to nothing more than sighs and groans; and the Apostle commands "that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands." (1 Tim. 2: 8.) *Public prayer* is that which, by the use of certain words, is offered up to God by the whole church in the congregation, the minister leading, as it is right and proper that he should in the public gatherings of the church. Language, or the use of the tongue, is necessary for this form of prayer. Hence Christ said: *When ye pray, say, Our Father*, &c. It was also chiefly for this that the tongue was made, that God might be praised and magnified by it; and it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh. Lastly, by this others are also invited to praise and worship God.

II. Why is Prayer necessary for Christians?

The reasons on account of which prayer is necessary for Christians are these: 1. *The command of God.* God has commanded that we call upon him, and desires that we in this way chiefly worship and praise him. "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee." "Ask and it shall be given you." "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven." (Ps. 50: 15. Matt. 7: 7. Luke 11: 2.) 2. *Our necessity and want.* We do not obtain the blessings which are necessary for us, except we ask them at the hands of God; for he has promised them to none but such as ask. Prayer is, therefore, just as necessary for us as it is necessary for a beggar to ask alms.

The same thing must be understood respecting the necessity of thanksgiving, which is said concerning the necessity of prayer; for without the giving of thanks we lose those things which are given, and do not receive those which are necessary and should be given. And the necessity of both will readily appear, whether we consider the effects or cause of faith, and so also faith itself. Faith is neither kindled nor increased in any one who does not desire or ask it. No one has faith who is not thankful for it; for all those who are possessed of true faith taste the grace of God, and those who have tasted of the grace of God show themselves thankful to God for it, and desire it more and more. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." (Rom. 5: 5.) The Holy Ghost is also obtained by prayer; for he is given to none, except those who seek and desire him.

Obj. 1. But the wicked receive many of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, who nevertheless do not ask or desire them. Therefore these things are not merely given to such as desire them. Ans. The wicked do indeed receive many gifts; but not such as are principal nor peculiar to the elect, as faith, repentance, conversion, remission of sins and regeneration. And still further, the gifts which they do receive do not contribute to their salvation, but to their destruction. And should any one reply, and say that infants do not desire the Holy Ghost, and yet receive him, so that he must be given to more than those who ask and desire, we answer that the Holy

Ghost is not given to any except such as desire him, which is to say, to adults who are capable of asking and seeking him. And yet even infants desire the Holy Ghost after their manner, in that they have in possibility an inclination to seek him just as they according to their manner believe, or have an inclination to faith. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength." (Ps. 8 : 2.)

Obj. 2. The effect is not prior to its own proper cause. Prayer is the effect of the Holy Ghost, inasmuch as no one who does not possess the Holy Ghost can desire him; and he alone indites prayer within us. Therefore the Holy Ghost is not received by prayer, but is in us before we give utterance to prayer, and is consequently given not merely to such as desire him. Ans. The effect is not prior to its own cause in order and nature, but in time they both exist together. So the Holy Ghost, and our desiring him, are both in us at the same moment in respect to time, although it is different according to nature. For the Holy Ghost is in us, according to nature, before we give utterance to prayer, inasmuch as we then for the first time begin to desire him, and to ask him of God, when he is given unto us; but according to time he is simultaneous with our prayers. For we begin to desire the presence of the Holy Ghost as soon as he is given unto us, and he is also given just as soon as he is desired and sought, or in other words, God effects in us a desire of the Holy Ghost and gives him unto us in the very same moment. Yea it may be said that he produces in us a desire of the Holy Ghost by commanding us to pray for him; and in producing this desire he at the same time gives him unto those who ask and desire him. God does not so work in us, therefore, as when a ray of the sun falls upon a vessel; because the Holy Ghost is a gift of such a character, that he is given, received and prayed for at one and the same time. We might also make a distinction between the beginning and increase of the Spirit within us, inasmuch as we do not desire the latter before we have the former. No one desires the Holy Ghost, except he in whom the Spirit dwells. But the first solution or answer which we have given must suffice. For that which Christ says in Luke 11 : 13, "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him," is not to be understood merely of the increase, but also of the beginning of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit.

Question 117. What are the requisites of that prayer, which is acceptable to God, and which he will hear?

Answer. First, that we from the heart pray to the one true God only, who hath manifested himself in his word, for all things he hath commanded us to ask of him: secondly, that we rightly and thoroughly know our need and misery, that so we may deeply humble ourselves in the presence of his divine majesty: thirdly, that we be fully persuaded that he, notwithstanding that we are unworthy of it, will, for the sake of Christ our Lord, certainly hear our prayer, as he has promised us in his word.

Question 118. What hath God commanded us to ask of him?

Answer. All things necessary for soul and body; which Christ our Lord has comprised in that prayer he himself has taught us.

EXPOSITION.

The conditions of acceptable prayer are —

1. *That it be directed to the true God*, or that the true God be called upon, who has revealed himself in the church by the word delivered by the Prophets and Apostles, and by the work of creation, preservation and redemption. This true God now is the eternal Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "*As we have received*," said Basil, "*so have we been baptized, and as we have been baptized, so do we believe, and as we believe, so do we worship the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.*"

2. The second requisite of acceptable prayer, *is a knowledge of the divine commandment.* Without the commandment of God we doubt in regard to our being heard. The person, however, that has an eye to the divine command, rests fully assured that his prayers are acceptable to God; because the worship which God requires of us, in his word, cannot be other wise than pleasing to him. When we pray, therefore, we ought so to think and resolve, *I call upon thee, because thou hast commanded me.*

3. *A knowledge of the things* which we ought to ask at the hands of God, is also necessary to effectual prayer. God does not desire us to direct vague and wandering petitions to him, being uncertain what we would pray for. A king would consider himself derided and mocked if any one were to kneel before him, without knowing what to ask at his hands. So God will have us consider and think what things we should ask of him, if we would pray unto him and not mock him when we come into his presence. We, however, do not know what we should ask. It is for this reason that Christ has prescribed a form of prayer, which contains the sum and substance of the things which we should pray for. To sum up the whole in as few words as possible, we would say, we should pray for things which we are certain are approved of by God, and promised. These consist of two kinds — such as are spiritual and temporal, both of which God desires us to ask at his hands. *Spiritual* things, because they are necessary to our salvation, and *temporal* things, 1. That the desire of them may exercise our faith, and confirm our confidence in regard to our obtaining such things as are spiritual. The reason is, because no one can expect good things of God, except he be reconciled to him. 2. That we may consider and reflect upon the providence of God, knowing that these small and comparatively unimportant things do not come fortuitously.

4. There must be *a true desire for* those things which we ask of God, if our prayers are heard. God will not have our prayer to be feigned, or hypocritical — they must come from the heart, and not merely from the lips. God wills us to pray with an earnest desire of the heart, for it is not the words of the mouth, but the sighs and groans of the heart, that constitute true prayer, as the Lord said unto Moses, "Wherefore criest thou unto me?" when Moses, nevertheless, said nothing. (Ex. 14: 15.) Hence an ardent desire is to be made the general and chief thing in the definition of prayer.

5. *A knowledge and sense of our own want.* This should be the spring or fountain from which all our desires should proceed; for what any one does not feel himself greatly in need of, that he will not ardently desire. All of us now stand in need of God.

6. *True humility with an acknowledgement of our want.* We should

cast ourselves before the divine Majesty as humble suppliants. God is under no obligation to us. All of us, too, were the enemies of God before our conversion. God now does not hear sinners; that is, such proud sinners as the Pharisee was, who prayed standing in the highest seat in the temple. Hence, true humility, penitence, and conversion are necessary to acceptable prayer. The promises of God, too, have respect merely to such as are converted. No one can pray in faith without conversion to God; and without faith, no one can have any assurance of being heard, nor does he receive what he desires.

7. *A knowledge of Christ the Mediator, and trust in him*, are likewise necessary, in order that we may rest assured that both we and our prayers please God, not on account of any worthiness on our part, but only for the Mediator's sake. It was in this way that Daniel prayed and asked to be heard *for the Lord's sake*. (Dan. 9: 17.) Christ also commands us to pray to the Father in his name. Our prayers should be placed upon our altar, even Christ. So shall they be acceptable to God.

8. *Confidence of being heard.* As it respects the former condition, faith is necessary in order that we may be fully persuaded that we are just before God, and that he is reconciled to us in Christ. Here faith or confidence of being heard is necessary, inasmuch as this cannot exist independent of the former. "Because ye are sons, God hath put forth the Spirit of his Son, into your hearts, crying, Aba, Father." "Without faith, it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Gal. 4: 6. Heb. 11: 6.)

We must, however, here observe in respect to this confidence of being heard, that there is a difference in the things which are to be prayed for. Some gifts are necessary to salvation, as are those which are spiritual; whilst there are others — such as are temporal — without which we may be saved. The former are to be simply and positively desired with full confidence that we shall as certainly receive them, as we ask them specially at the hands of God. The latter are indeed to be sought and desired, but with the condition of the will of God, that he will confer them upon us, if they contribute to his glory, and are profitable to us; or that he will confer upon us other and better things, either now or hereafter as may seem best in his sight. We should in praying for these things imitate the example of the leper, who said, "Lord if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." (Matt. 8: 2.) It is in this way that the faithful present their prayers before God, and desire to be heard, inasmuch as we oftentimes pray for things which, perhaps, would be more injury than advantage to us, if God were to hear and grant our requests.

Obj. He who asks doubtingly does not ask in faith, and is not heard. We seek temporal blessings with doubt, inasmuch as we pray for them conditionally. Therefore, we do not ask them in faith. Ans. The major proposition is either particular, or else it is not true. For the nature of faith does not demand that we be fully assured in reference to temporal blessings, but merely in reference to spiritual blessings, such as the forgiveness of sins, and eternal life, which are necessary to salvation. Respecting temporal benefits, it is sufficient if faith submit itself to the word of God, and desire and pray for such things as are profitable for us. We also deny the truth of the minor proposition; for although we do pray

conditionally for temporal blessings, yet we do not simply doubt in regard to our obtaining them. We believe that we shall obtain from God the temporal blessings which we ask at his hand, if they contribute to our salvation, and do not desire to be heard, if they would be injurious to us. We, therefore, notwithstanding ask in faith, when we submit to the word of God and acquiesce in his will, and pray to be heard according to the good pleasure of our heavenly Father. For faith submits itself to every word and desire of God. But the will and pleasure of God consist in this, that we desire and pray for spiritual things simply, and for temporal things conditionally, and that we be fully persuaded that we shall receive the former particularly; and the latter in as far as they contribute to the glory of God and our salvation. Praying in this way, we do not doubt in regard to our being heard.

9. *A knowledge of the divine promise, with confidence in it.* God promises that he will hear those who call upon him, observing the conditions which we have now specified. "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee." "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." (Ps. 50: 15. Is. 65: 24.) Without this promise, that we shall be heard in what we ask of God, there is no faith; and without faith, prayer is of no avail. Except we have faith in the divine promises, and have a regard to them in our prayers, they will not avail us any thing, neither can we desire any thing with a good conscience. Confidence in the divine promise produces an assurance of being heard, and of our salvation, which assurance kindles in us a desire of calling upon God, and of making supplication to him.

From the conditions which we have specified as being necessary to constitute acceptable prayer, it readily appears what a great difference there is between the prayers of the godly and the ungodly. The godly desire to observe all these conditions in drawing near to God in prayer: the ungodly, on the other hand, either neglect all of them, or else they observe one or two of these conditions, and fall short as it respects the rest. *Some* commit an error, as it were, in the very threshhold, having an incorrect knowledge of the nature and will of God, and so violate the very first condition necessary to acceptable prayer — *some* err in the things which they pray for, in that they pray for things that are evil, uncertain, and not approved of by God — *some* ask blessings of God hypocritically — *some* ask without any consciousness or sense of the want of the blessings for which they pray — *some* have no confidence in Christ the mediator — *some* ask that they may be heard in the things which they pray for, and yet persist in sin — *some* ask things necessary for salvation, and yet do it with distrust, whilst *others* again address prayers to God, and yet never think of the divine promise, and therefore ask without faith, and so receive no answer to their prayers.

Question 119. What are the words of that prayer?

ANSWER.

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on

earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

EXPOSITION.

The form of prayer prescribed by Christ is recited by two of the evangelists, Matthew and Luke. It is, without doubt, the best, the most expressive and perfect form of prayer that has ever been delivered. It was delivered by Christ, who is the wisdom of God, and whose words were always heard and answered by his heavenly Father. It also contains, in the most condense form, all things which are to be sought as necessary for soul and body. It is in like manner a rule or pattern with which all our prayers ought to conform and agree.

It is sometimes asked, *Are we so bound down to this form of prayer, as not to be permitted to use other and different words when we pray?* We reply to this question, that Christ delivered this form, not that we should be restricted to these words, but that we might know *what things we should ask of God, and how we should ask them.* It is a general form respecting the manner, and the things which we should pray for. It is likewise frequently the case that there are particular benefits necessary for us, which we should particularly ask of God, according as it is said, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." "If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." "Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter." (John 16 : 23. James 1 : 5. Matt. 24 : 20.) But these things are not to be found in this prayer as far as the words are concerned. There are also many examples of prayers, both in the Old and New Testament, which as to the words, at least, are different from this prayer; as the prayers of Jehoshaphat, Solomon, Daniel; of Christ himself, of the apostles, &c. (2 Chron. 20 : 6. 2 Kings 8 : 15. Dan. 9 : 4. John 17 : 1. Acts 4 : 24.) These prayers, too, were heard and answered of God. It follows, therefore, that this form prescribed by Christ is a thing indifferent in as far as it respects the words.

Obj. 1. But we must not pretend to be wiser than Christ. Therefore since he has prescribed a certain form of prayer for us, we should be satisfied with it, and are chargeable with doing wrong whenever we use other forms of prayer. Ans. We should, indeed, do wrong in departing from this form of prayer, if Christ had intended to restrict us to its use. But he did not design to restrict us to the very language of this prayer; for his purpose was, when he gave this form to the disciples and taught them thus to pray, to give them a summary of the things which we should ask of God in our prayers.

Obj. 2. That should be retained, than which no better can be invented. But it is not possible for us to invent any better form of prayer, nor to select more suitable words, than we find in the Lord's Prayer. Therefore we should retain both the form and the words of Christ. Ans. We cannot

invent a better form, nor more suitable words for the purpose of expressing the same summary, which is, as it were, the general of all those things which we ought to seek in prayer. These kinds or classes of benefits which Christ has prescribed in this form of prayer as the ones to be prayed for, cannot be presented in a better form. But then Christ will have us to decend into particulars, and pray for special benefits according to our necessity. The form which Christ has prescribed is nothing else than a series of certain classes or heads, under which may be comprehended and referred all spiritual and temporal blessings necessary for us. Hence when Christ commands us to pray for these general benefits, he at the same time commands us to pray for every special benefit included in that which is general. And still further, those things which are here expressed generally, we ought to specify particularly, that we may in this way be led to a consideration of our necessity, and to a desire of asking God to help us in our necessity. But it is necessary in order that we may do this, that we should have special forms of prayer; for the explanation of that which is general by that which is special necessarily requires other forms of expression. Hence Augustin declares that all the prayers of the saints which we have in the Scriptures are contained in the Lord's Prayer. Augustin also adds, that we are at liberty to express the same things in other words when we pray, but are not allowed to pray for things different from those comprehended in this prayer.

FORTY-SIXTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 120. Why hath Christ commanded us to address God thus, "OUR FATHER?"

Answer. That immediately, in the very beginning of our prayer, he might excite in us a childlike reverence for, and confidence in God, which are the foundation of our prayer; namely, that God is become our father in Christ, and will much less deny us what we ask of him in true faith, than our parents refuse us earthly things.

EXPOSITION.

The Lord's Prayer consists of three parts; a preface — petitions, and a conclusion.

The preface is contained in the words, *Our Father which art in heaven.* This again consists of two parts: a calling upon the true God contained in the words, *Our Father*, and a description of the true God expressed by the words, *Who art in heaven.* Christ will have us to pray in this way, because God desires to be called upon with due honor, which consists, 1. In true knowledge. 2. In confidence. 3. In obedience. *Obedience* comprehends true love, fear, hope, humility and patience.

Our Father. God is our Father, 1. In respect to our creation. "Which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God." 2. In respect to our redemption, and reception into divine favor through Christ our mediator. Christ is the only begotten and natural Son of God — we are by

nature the children of wrath, and are adopted as children by God for Christ sake. 3. In respect to our sanctification or regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

Christ will have us call God, *Father*, and so to address him, 1. *That we may direct true prayer to God*, who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2. *On account of true knowledge*, that we may know and acknowledge him to be our Father, who for the sake of the Son of God our mediator, adopted us as his children, when we were his enemies. "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father." (John 20: 17.) This same God also regenerates us by the Holy Spirit, and confers upon us all necessary good. 3. *On account of reverence*, or that we may be led to cherish true reverence towards God; for since he is our Father, we, therefore, conduct ourselves as it is proper for children to do, and cherish such reverence for him as children should have for a father, especially those who have been adopted, and are undeserving of the benefits of God. 4. *On account of confidence*, or that we may have such a confidence wrought in us as that by which we may be assured of being heard, and that God will grant us all things which pertain to our salvation. For since God, whom we call upon, is our Father, and loved us so greatly as to give his only begotten Son to die for us, how shall he not with him give us all things necessary to our salvation. (Rom. 8: 32.) 5. *For a remembrance of creation.* God now will hear none but those who thus pray unto him, because it is in them only that he obtains the end of his blessings.

Obj. 1. We call upon the Father according to the command of Christ. Therefore we are not to call upon the Son and Holy Ghost. Ans. We deny the consequence which is here drawn; for it is no just conclusion which infers that certain attributes are withdrawn from the other persons of the Godhead, when they are attributed to one of the persons. Again: the name of the *Father*, as the name of God, when it is opposed to creatures, must be understood essentially; and where it is used in connection with the other persons of the Godhead, it must be understood personally. The name *Father* must, therefore, here be understood essentially, the reasons of which are evident: 1. Because the name of *Father* is not here put in opposition to the other persons of the Godhead, but in opposition to creatures by whom he is called upon. It is in this way that Christ is called by the prophet Isaiah *the everlasting Father*. (Is. 9: 6.) 2. Because when one of the persons of the Godhead is named, the others are not excluded, when mention is made of their external operations or works. 3. We cannot think of God the Father, and draw near to him, except in his Son, our mediator. The Son has also made us the sons of God by the Holy Spirit, who is for this reason called the Spirit of adoption. 4. Christ commands us to call upon him likewise, saying, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." (John 16: 23.) 5. Christ gives the Holy Ghost. It is, therefore, he himself from whom we are to ask the Holy Spirit.

Obj. 2. Christ is called, and is our brother. Therefore he is not our Father. Ans. He is our brother in as far as he is man; and our Father in as far as he is God, our Creator and Redeemer. He is the everlasting Father. (Is. 9: 6.)

Obj. 3. He who receives us into favor for Christ's sake, is not Christ himself. But the Father, whom we here so call, receives us into favor for

Christ's sake. Therefore he is not Christ. Ans. He who receives us into favor for Christ's sake, is not Christ himself, viz., in the same respect. Christ, as mediator, is he on account of whom we are received into divine favor; but as God he is the person who receives us.

Our Father. Why does Christ direct us to say *our* Father, and not *my* Father? He does this:

1. That he may excite in us a confidence of being heard: for since we do not pray alone, but seeing that the whole church unites its voice with ours, God will not reject the prayers of the whole church, but hears them, according as it is said: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." But some one may perhaps be ready to say, it is often the case that Christians pray at home when the church is ignorant of it; but then Christians, and the whole church, always pray for themselves, and for all the members, with desire and affection. Love is an habitual quality, abiding even when we are asleep, and is not an affection or passion quickly passing away. Hence, when any one prays alone in his closet, the whole church prays with him in affection and desire.

2. That he might admonish us to mutual love. Christians possessing mutual love should pray one for another. It is for this reason that Christ, by placing the word *our* in the very commencement of this prayer, would admonish us of the duty of cherishing mutual love: 1. Because where there is no true love to our neighbor, there is no true prayer; neither can we have any assurance that God will hear us. For if we come into the presence of God, having no regard for our brethren, the sons of God, he will not regard us as his sons. 2. Because where there is no love to our neighbor, there is no faith; and without faith there is no prayer; "for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Rom. 14: 23.)

Obj. It belongs to a father to withhold nothing from his children. But God withholds many things from us. Therefore he is not our Father. Ans. It belongs to a father to grant his children everything necessary and proper for them; and to withhold from them whatever is unnecessary, useless and hurtful. It is in this way that God deals with us, giving us all good things, temporal and spiritual, which are necessary and profitable, and contribute to our salvation.

Question 121. Why is here added, "WHICH ART IN HEAVEN?"

Answer. Lest we should form any earthly conceptions of God's heavenly majesty, and that we may expect from his almighty power all things necessary for soul and body.

EXPOSITION.

The second part of the preface of the Lord's prayer is contained in the words, *Who art in heaven;* that is, heavenly. The term heaven, as here used, signifies the abode or habitation of God, of the holy angels, and blessed men, concerning which God says in the prophecy of Isaiah, *Heaven is my throne;* and of which Christ says, *In my father's house are many mansions.* (Is. 66: 1. John 14: 2.) God is indeed everywhere by his immensity; but he is said to exist and to dwell in heaven, because he is

there more glorious than in the world, and there manifests himself immediately. Christ now commands us to address God as *our Father who art in heaven:*

1. That he might show what a contrast and difference there is between earthly parents and his Father; or that he might separate him from earthly parents, and that we might regard him as such a Father: 1. Who is not earthly, but heavenly, dwelling gloriously in heaven. 2. Who rules everywhere with heavenly glory and majesty, presides over all things, and who governs by his providence the whole world which he himself created. 3. Who is free from all manner of corruption and change. 4. Who even there, that is in heaven, manifests himself gloriously to angels, and declares what a Father he is, how good, how great and rich.

2. That he might excite in us a confidence that God hears us; because if he is our Father, and is possessed of infinite goodness, which he especially displays in heaven, then he will also give us all things necessary for our salvation; and if this our Father be also Lord in heaven, and possessed of infinite power, so that he can help us in our need, then he can also easily grant unto us what we ask at his hands.

3. That he might excite in us reverence. For since our Father is so great a Lord,—even one that is heavenly, who rules everywhere, and has power to cast both soul and body into hell,—we ought to reverence him, and come into his presence with the greatest humiliation of soul and body.

4. That we may call upon him in fervency of spirit.

5. That the minds of all those who worship him may be elevated and fixed upon heavenly things.

6. That we may be led to desire heavenly things

7. That we may not fall into the error of the heathen, who imagine that God can be adored and worshipped in creatures.

8. That we might be admonished not to direct our prayers to any particular place, as under the Old Testament.

FORTY-SEVENTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 122. Which is the first petition?

Answer. "HALLOWED BE THY NAME;" that is, grant us first rightly to know thee, and to sanctify, glorify and praise thee in all thy works, in which thy power, wisdom, goodness, justice, mercy, and truth, are clearly displayed; and further also, that we may so order and direct our whole lives, our thoughts, words and actions, as that thy name may never be blasphemed, but rather honored and praised on our account.

EXPOSITION.

The second part of the Lord's Prayer now follows, containing six petitions. The petition, *Hallowed be thy name*, is placed first in order, because it comprehends the *end and design* of all the rest, inasmuch as the glory of God should be the end of all our affairs, actions and prayers. The end, too, is the first thing in the thoughts and intention of any one, and the last

in execution. Therefore the end of the other petitions should be sought in the first place, if we would seek them aright, according to the command of Christ, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added unto you." (Matt. 7: 33.)

We must consider, in reference to this petition:

I. *What is the name of God?*
II. *What is holy, and what is it to hallow the name of God?*

I. What is the name of God?

The name of God signifies: 1. *God himself.* "Let them that love thy name be joyful in thee." "I will sing praise to thy name." "I will call upon the name of the Lord." "I purpose to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God." (Ps. 5: 11; 9: 2, 11; 116: 13. 1 Kings 5: 5.) 2. *The attributes and works of God.* "The Lord is his name." "The Lord, whose name is Jealous." (Ex. 15: 3; 34: 14.) 3. *The command, will and authority of God.* "I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts." "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (1 Sam. 17: 45. Matt. 28: 19.) 4. *The worship, trust, praise and profession of God.* "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ;" in which place, as also in Matt. 28: 19, the name of God signifies both the command and profession of God. (Acts 21: 13; 2: 38.) Here the term is to be understood, according to the first and second signification, as being taken for God himself, and for all his attributes and works, in which his majesty shines.

II. What is holy, and what to hallow.

The term *holy* signifies, 1. *God himself*, who is most holy and pure; or it signifies essential and uncreated holiness, which is God himself. For all the virtues and properties of God constitute his essential holiness. So the angels exclaim in reference to God, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." (Is. 6: 3.) 2. *The holiness which is in creatures*, which consists in their conformity with God, which, as it respects the godly, is merely begun, but is perfect in the angels. 3. *The setting of anything apart to a holy use.* In this sense, whatever is consecrated to a sacred purpose is called holy, as the temple in Jerusalem, the altar, the vessels, the priests, &c., &c.

The word to *sanctify, or hallow*, has these three significations: *First*, to hallow or to sanctify means to acknowledge, to reverence and praise that as holy, which is already in itself holy. In this sense of the term, we are said to sanctify God who is holiness itself, 1. When we acknowledge him to be such as he has revealed himself in his word and works, or when we know and think concerning his essence, will, works, omnipotence, goodness, wisdom, and all his other attributes, what he commands us in his word to know and think respecting them. 2. When we do not only acknowledge God to be holy, but also profess and praise him, and that by our words and confession, as well as by our actions and purity of life. 3. When we refer

the true doctrine, knowledge, and profession of the holiness of God, together with all our prayers and actions, to the end to which God will have them referred, which is to his glory and praise.

Secondly, to sanctify, is to separate that which in itself is not holy from all uncleanness, and make it holy. It was in this way that the Word sanctified that nature which he assumed, which in us is corrupt and unholy, preserving it in himself from all the contagion of sin, and at the same time adorning it with perfect holiness. So also God and Christ sanctify the church, by remitting unto us all our sins, and sanctifying us by the Holy Spirit, and at the same time keeping us in the enjoyment of this pardon and holiness. So we are commanded to sanctify ourselves, which is to keep ourselves from all the filthiness of the flesh. "Be ye holy, for I am holy." (1 Pet. 1 : 16.)

Thirdly, to sanctify is to ordain and to direct to a holy end that which in itself is either holy or indifferent. It was in this way that the Father sanctified the Son, that is, he ordained him to the office of mediator, and sent him into the world. So God sanctified the Sabbath day, the temple, the sacrifices, the priests, &c. Christ also sanctified himself in this way for his people, that is, he offered himself a sacrifice holy and acceptable to God. It is in this way also, that bread is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

Of these significations the first and second are here in point, for when we pray, *hallowed be thy name*, we do not merely desire that the name of God be hallowed by us, but also in us, or in other words we desire, 1. That God would enlighten us with the knowledge of his holiness, and most holy name; or in the language of the Catechism, we desire that God *will grant us rightly to know him, and to sanctify, glorify and praise him in all his works, in which his power, wisdom, goodness, justice, mercy and truth are clearly displayed.* 2. That his name may be sanctified in us, and that he would regenerate us and make us more and more holy, so that in our whole life we may prevent his most holy name from being blasphemed, and may magnify and declare it with honor and praise in every conceivable way. *In a word*, we desire, 1. That God would enlighten us with the true knowledge of his holiness. 2. That he would grant us true faith and repentance, and renew us by his Spirit, that we may be holy as he is holy. 3. That he would give us a disposition to profess this holiness of his divine name in word and deed, to his own praise and glory, that we may in this way glorify him by acknowledging and professing him, and by conforming our lives to his holy will, so as to distinguish him from all idols and profane things.

Obj. 1. That which is holy in itself, cannot be sanctified. The name of God is holy in itself. Therefore, it cannot be hallowed. Ans. It cannot be sanctified according to the second signification of the term as above explained; but it may be sanctified according to the first and third signification of the term, according to which that which is holy or indifferent in itself, may be acknowledged, praised and celebrated, and directed to a holy end. It is in this way now that we desire the name of God to be hallowed, that that which is holy in itself may also be acknowledged and praised as holy. God sanctifies us by making us holy; we, on the other hand, sanctify God, not by making him holy, but by declaring and acknowledging concerning him what he desires us to know and declare.

Obj. 2. We ought not to desire another to do for us, what belongs to us to do. We now ought to sanctify and hallow the name of God. Therefore, we should not desire that God would hallow his name; for in so doing we seem to act like a scholar, who being commanded by his preceptor to apply himself diligently to his studies, desires his preceptor himself to do it for him. We reply to the major proposition by making a distinction; we should not desire another to do what is devolving upon us, provided we have the ability of ourselves to do it; but what we are unable of ourselves to perform, that we properly desire God to grant us the ability to do. But we cannot of ourselves sanctify and hallow the name of God. Therefore, we must needs pray to God to grant unto us the strength by which we may hallow the name of God; yea, that he himself would hallow his holy name in us.

FORTY-EIGHTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 123. Which is the second petition?

Answer. "THY KINGDOM COME;" that is, rule us so by thy word and Spirit, that we may submit ourselves more and more to thee; preserve and increase thy Church; destroy the works of the devil, and all violence which would exalt itself against thee, and also all wicked counsels devised against thy holy word, until the full perfection of thy kingdom takes place, wherein thou shalt be all in all.

EXPOSITION.

Thy kingdom come. The sense is, let thy kingdom grow amongst us and increase by continual advances; and always by new accessions, O God, let thy kingdom which thou hast in thy church, be enlarged and multiplied.

The questions which chiefly claim our attention in connection with this petition, are the following:

I. *What is the kingdom of God?*
II. *How mani-fold is the kingdom of God?*
III. *Who is the Head and King of this kingdom?*
IV. *Who are the subjects of this kingdom?*
V. *What are the laws of this kingdom?*
VI. *What are the benefits enjoyed in this kingdom?*
VII. *Who are its enemies?*
VIII. *Where is it administered?*
IX. *How long will it continue?*
X. *How it comes to us?*
XI. *Why should we pray that it may come?*

I. WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

A kingdom in general is a form of civil government in which some one person possesses the chief power and authority, who, being possessed of

greater and more excellent gifts and virtues than others, rules over all according to just, wholesome and certain laws by defending the good and punishing the wicked. *The kingdom of God* is that in which God alone rules and exercises dominion over all creatures; but especially does he govern and preserve the church. This kingdom is *universal*. *The special* kingdom of God — that which he exercises in his church consists in sending the Son from the Father, from the very beginning of the world, that he might institute and preserve the ministry of the church, and accomplish his purposes by it — that he might gather a church from the whole human race by his word and Spirit — rule, preserve and defend it against all enemies — raise it from death, and at length, having cast all enemies into everlasting condemnation, adorn it with heavenly glory, that God may be all in all, and be praised eternally by the church.

From this difinition we may infer and specify these particular parts of the kingdom of God: 1. The sending of the Son, our Mediator, into the world. 2. The institution and preservation of the ministry by him. 3. The gathering of the church from the whole human race, by the preaching of the gospel, and by the power of the Holy Ghost working true faith and repentance in the elect. 4. The perpetual government of the church. 5. The preservation of it in this life, notwithstanding all the fierce assaults of enemies. 6. The casting of all the enemies of the church into everlasting punishment. 7. The raising of the church to everlasting life. 8. The glorification of the church in eternal life, when God will be all in all. O this Kingdom it is said; "I have set my King upon the holy hill of Zion." "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." "My kingdom is not of this world." (Ps. 2: 6; 110: 2. John 18: 36.)

From these things it is apparent that this kingdom is not a worldly, but a *spiritual* kingdom. This is taught in many of the parables of our Lord, as well as in the declaration which he made to Pilate, saying, "My kingdom is *not of this world*. We are here taught and commanded to pray that this kingdom may come, increase and be defended.

II. How mani-fold is the Kingdom of God?

This Kingdom is only one in reality, but differs in the mode of its administration. It is administered differently here from what it is in heaven. It is commonly spoken of and distinguished as the Kingdom of grace and of glory. The same distinction is sometimes expressed in this way; the kingdom of heaven is two-fold—*the one* is begun in this life—*the other* is perfected in the life to come. When we pray, *thy kingdom come*, we desire both that it may be established among and in us in this life, and that it may be brought to its highest and ultimate development in the life to come. Yet it is the *same kingdom*, distinct only by degrees and in the mode of administration. This kingdom, as it exists in this world, has need of means; but in its ultimate state of developement, there will be no need of means; because the church will then be perfectly glorified, and delivered from the evil of guilt and punishment, when God shall be all in all.

This may be regarded as furnishing an explanation of what the apostle Paul says in reference to this kingdom, 1 Cor. 15: 24, where he declares that Christ *shall deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father*, by which we are to understand that what pertains to the form of the administration

of this kingdom, Christ will deliver up to the Father after the glorification of the church, and will then cease to discharge the office of mediator. There will then be no need ef conversion, of abolishing of sin, of defence against enemies, of gathering the church, of raising the dead, and glorifying them, because the saints will then have been perfected and glorified. Christ will not then teach his people, for they shall all be taught of God. Prophecies shall be abolished, tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall vanish away; for "when that which is perfect shall come, then that which is in part shall be done away." The means, therefore, by which the church is now gathered and preserved in the world, will then be no longer required. There will then be no enemies to subdue; but the church will reign gloriously with Christ, and God shall be all in all; that is, he will manifest and communicate himself immediately to the blessed. "And I saw no temple therein (viz: in this kingdom in its state of ultimate developement) for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city shall have no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten, and the Lamb is the light thereof." (Rev. 21: 22, 23.)

III. Who is King and Head in this Kingdom of God?

The Head and King of this Kingdom is one, because there is one God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The Father reigns by the Son and Holy Ghost. Christ is the Head of this Kingdom in a particular manner: 1. Because he is God, sitting at the right hand of the Father, ruling all things in equal power and glory with the Father. 2. Because he is Mediator, or that person through whom God the Father works immediately and gives the Holy Spirit. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father." "And gave him to be Head over all things to the church." (John 15: 26. Eph. 1: 22.)

IV. Who are the citizens and surjects of this Kingdom?

The citizens of this Kingdom include, 1. The angels, who are confirmed in holiness. 2. The saints in heaven composing what is called the church triumphant. 3. The godly, or those who are converted and still living in the world, having as yet many cares and remains of corruption, composing what is called the church militant. 4. Hypocrites, who are members merely of the visible church, without being truly converted. These are merely apparent citizens, being members of the kingdom of Christ only in name. They are called citizens of this kingdom, as the Jews were called by Christ the children of the kingdom. (Matt. 8: 12.) Of these persons it is said, *The first shall be last*; (Matt. 20: 16) that is, those who wish to be regarded as the first and yet are not, shall be last—they shall be declared as such as have no place in the kingdom of God.

V. What are the Laws of this Kingdom?

The laws according to which this Kingdom is administered are—1. The word of God, or the doctrine of the law and the gospel. 2. The power and efficacy of the Holy Spirit working and reigning in the hearts of the elect by the word.

VI. What benefits does the King bestow upon his subjects in this Kingdom?

There is no Kingdom which does not have a regard for the well-being of its subjects. Aristotle, in writing to Alexander, says, "*A kingdom is not injury or oppression*, but bountifulness." Hence the kingdom of God has in like manner benefits peculiar to itself. These are the spiritual and eternal benefits of Christ, including true faith, conversion, the forgiveness of sins, righteousness, perseverance in holiness, the Holy Spirit, glorification and eternal life. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." "The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the word giveth give I unto you." (John 8: 36. Rom. 14: 17. John 14: 27.)

VII. Who are the enemies of the kingdom of God?

The enemies of the kingdom of God are the devil and wicked men. Of the latter, some are in the church as hypocrites, who arrogate to themselves the name and title of citizens of this kingdom, whilst they are nothing more than the pretended friends of Christ. Others again are without the church, and are its open and avowed enemies, as the Turks, the Jews, the Samosatenians, the Arians, and all those who defend errors that subvert the foundation of our most holy religion.

VIII. Where is this kingdom administered?

This kingdom, as it respects the beginning and gathering of it, is administered here upon earth, yet in such a way that it is not confined in any one particular place, island, province and nation; but is scattered over the whole world. "I will that men pray every where." "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (1 Tim. 2: 8. Matt. 18: 20.) No one ever falls from, or loses his right and title in this kingdom if he continues in true faith. This kingdom is administered in heaven as it respects its complete developement. "And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." "Where I am, there shall also my servant be." "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am." "We shall be caught up to meet the Lord, in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (John 14: 3; 12: 26; 17: 24. 1 Thes. 4: 17.)

IX. How long will this kingdom continue?

The gathering of this kingdom continues from the beginning to the end of the world, because there always were, now are, and ever shall be some members of the true church, whether few or many, who are to be gathered from the world into the kingdom of God. This kingdom will continue in its state of perfection from the glorification of the righteous to all eternity. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father;" which, as we have already observed, must be understood respecting the form of the administration of this kingdom. (1 Cor. 15: 24.)

X. How this Kingdom comes to us?

This kingdom comes to us in four ways: 1. *By the preaching of the gospel*, which reveals unto us a knowledge of the true and heavenly doctrine. 2. *By conversion*, when some are converted to God, who grants unto them faith and repentance. 3. By increase and developement. When the godly make progress in holiness, or when the gifts peculiar to the faithful are continually being increased in those who are converted. "He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy let him be holy still. (Rev. 22: 11.) 4. *By the perfection* and glorification of the church at the second coming of Christ. "Even so come Lord Jesus." (Rev. 22: 20.)

XI. Why should we desire the coming of this kingdom?

We ought to pray that the kingdom of God may come both as to its commencement and ultimate developement, 1. *On account of the glory of God*, or for the sanctification and hallowing of his name; for that we may sanctify the name of God, it is necessary that he should rule us by his word and Spirit. If God does not establish his kingdom in us, and rescue us from the kingdom of the devil, we will never sanctify his name, but rather defile and cast reproach upon it, so that this second petition is necessary on account of the first. 2. *On account of our comfort and salvation.* God gives this kingdom to none except those who desire and pray for it, just as he gives the Holy Ghost to none but such as desire him.

From these things we may readily perceive what it is that we pray for by this petition, *thy kingdom come.* We desire and pray that God will by his Son, our mediator, whom he sent into the world from the very beginning, 1. Preserve the ministry which he has instituted. 2. That he would collect his church by the ministry of his word, and the influence of the Holy Spirit. 3. That he would rule and govern the church thus gathered, and us his members, by his Holy Spirit, who may subdue our hearts, control and change our wills, and conform us wholly to himself. 4. That he would defend us and the whole church against all enemies and tyrants. 5. That he would cast all his and our enemies into everlasting punishment. 6. That he would at length deliver his church and us from all evils, and glorify us in eternal life.

Obj. But that which our prayers neither hasten, nor retard, is sought and prayed for in vain. The kingdom of God, or the deliverance of the church from all the evils and miseries to which it is here subject, will not take place sooner or later than God has decreed it. Therefore it is sought and prayed for in vain. Ans. We deny the major proposition; for if this were so we might reason and conclude in the same way in reference to all the benefits which God confers upon us, that they should not be sought, inasmuch as they are all comprehended in his counsel. To this it is replied as follows:

1. But God has promised other blessings, with the condition that we should ask them at his hands. Ans. So also deliverance from all evils shall at length reach and be granted only to those in that day, who desire and long for it, whilst groaning under the cross, and who pray that it may come according to the decree of God, and that not one of the elect may be excluded.

2. But we ought not to pray that God would hasten the deliverance of the church, because this would result in the loss of many of the elect who are not as yet born into the world. Ans. When we pray that God would hasten the deliverance of the church, we also pray that all those who are to be brought into the fold of Christ may speedily be brought in, so that not one may be excluded, and this we do, 1. That the church may be speedily delivered, and that all the godly may enjoy a full and perfect rest from all their labors and cares. 2. That wickedness and ungodliness of every description may be speedily brought to an end, and that all the enemies of Christ and his church may be cast into everlasting punishment. 3. That the glory of God may be speedily seen in the perfect deliverance of the church and the rejection of all her enemies. We should, therefore, desire and ask of God in our daily prayers this our deliverance, and that also of the whole church, if we ourselves would at length be delivered with the church; for those who do not desire and pray for the coming of the Lord, to them he will not come, as to his saints.

FORTY-NINTH LORD'S DAY.

Question 124. Which is the third petition?

Answer. "THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN;" that is, grant that we and all men may renounce our own will, and without murmuring obey thy will, which is only good; that so every one may attend to, and perform the duties of his station and calling, as willingly and faithfully as the angels do in heaven.

EXPOSITION.

In considering this petition we must enquire,

I. *What is the will of God?*
II. *What we desire in this petition, and in what does it differ from the second?*
III. *Why is this petition necessary?*
IV. *Why is it added,* as in heaven?

I. WHAT IS THE WILL OF GOD?

The will of God signifies in the Scriptures, 1. The commandment of God. "Ye ministers of his that do his pleasure." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (Ps. 103: 21. 1 Thes. 4: 3.) 2. It signifies the events, or rather the decree of God respecting future events in which it is continually revealing and manifesting itself — "not my will, but thine be done." "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "Who hath resisted his will." (Luke 22: 42. Is. 46: 10. Rom. 9: 19.

II. WHAT DO WE DESIRE IN THIS PETITION, AND IN WHAT DOES IT DIFFER FROM THE SECOND?

Thy will be done. The sense is cause and grant that we may do not

our own will, which is corrupt and perverse, but thine which alone is just and holy, and that we may yield obedience to thee. We desire, therefore,

1. A denying of ourselves, which consists in these two parts: 1. That we hold ourselves in readiness to give up all our desires and wishes which are in opposition to the law of God. 2. That we hold ourselves in readiness to take up the cross, and submit ourselves willingly to God in all things. In offering up this petition, *thy will be done*, we pray, therefore, first of all, that God would bestow upon us his grace, so as to enable us to deny and renounce our own corrupt and perverse will, and be willing to suffer the loss of all things contrary to his will.

2. A cheerful and proper discharge of our duty, that every one in his appropriate sphere may be able to serve God with diligence, and to do his will, as well in those duties which are common as in those which are special. *Those duties are common*, which are required not only from us, but also from all christians, and comprise the virtues necessary for all the godly, as faith, conversion, godliness, charity, temperance, &c. *Special duties* are those which have respect to our own, and to every man's proper calling in life. In praying, therefore, that the will of God may be done, we desire that all these duties may be properly discharged, and that every one may abide in the calling which has been assigned him, and serve God therein, leaving the final issue of events with God, who disposes and directs all things.

3. We desire that such events as are not contrary to the will of God, and which are pleasing to him, may come to pass.

4. We pray that all our actions and designs may be blessed and prospered, or that God may be pleased, out of his infinite good, to direct and accompany with his blessing all our actions, counsels, desires and labors, so that no other events may follow them but such as he knows will most contribute to his glory and our salvation. God wills that we should desire these things, from him, and leave the final issue of things with himself, we in the mean time properly discharging our duties.

To express the whole in a few words, we may say that when we offer up the petition, *thy will be done*, we pray that God may, as it were, bury in us all corrupt desires and wishes, and that he alone may work in us by his Spirit, so that we, being sustained by divine grace, may discharge our various duties and carry out the end of our calling.

Obj. But the former petition also contains a request that we may rightly perform our duty. Therefore this seems to be superfluous. Ans. We do not here pray for precisely the same thing, that we do in the former petition: for in the former we desire that God may commence his kingdom in us, by ruling us by his Spirit, who renews our will, so that we henceforth, rightly discharging our duty, may render such obedience to our King, as becomes subjects of his kingdom. But in this petition we desire that we may all faithfully carry out the will of God respecting us by properly discharging our duties in the different spheres in which we are placed. Or we may express the difference thus; In the former petition we pray that the church may exist, be preserved and glorified: in this we ask of God that every one may properly discharge his duty in the church.

We may here as we pass along notice the connection and difference between the three petitions, which we have been considering. The connection between them is of the most intimate character, so much so that no one can

exist without the others. The third contributes to the second, and the second to the first: for the name of God is not sanctified, unless his kingdom come; nor does the kingdom of God come, except by the use of those means by which it is advanced. These means now are the duties which belong to every man's calling in life. They differ in the following respect: *In the first* we pray for sanctification, or for the true acknowledgement and praise of God, together with all his works and counsels. *In the second* we desire the gathering, preservation and government of the church, and that God may rule us by his word and Spirit, defend and protect us, and deliver us from all the evils of guilt and punishment. *In the third*, we desire that every one may be diligently engaged in his proper place, direct all that he does to the glory of God, and regard whatever God sends upon him as good and calculated to advance his well-being.

III. Why is this petition necessary?

This petition is necessary, 1. That the kingdom of God may come, which is the thing we pray for in the second petition; for unless God bring it to pass that every one in his own peculiar sphere diligently do his will, this kingdom cannot be established, flourish and be preserved. 2. That we may be in this kingdom. We cannot be members of this kingdom without doing the will of God. Nor can we of ourselves, on account of the corruption of our nature, do the will of God, if he does not give us the necessary strength. This strength now God does not grant unto any except those who desire it. Hence it is necessary that we should pray to God that he may impart it unto us.

Obj. It is not necessary that we should desire that which is always done, and which will certainly come to pass, even though we do not pray for it. The will of God is always done, and will most certainly come to pass, even though we do not desire it. Therefore it is not necessary that we should pray that it may be done. Ans. There is in the major proposition a fallacy in regarding that as a cause which is none; for we do not pray that the will of God may be done as if it would not be done, if we did not desire and pray for it, but for other causes, viz. that it may also be done by us, and that the events which God has ordained may contribute to our comfort and salvation. These events will not turn out to our advantage and salvation, unless we submit to the will of God, and desire only that to be done which God has decreed and desires to be done. We also deny the minor proposition, which is false, 1. As it respects the calling of every one; because those who do not desire and pray that they may be able in their appropriate sphere to discharge their duty correctly, faithfully and with comfort to themselves, never do it. 2. It is also false as it respects the divine decrees; because God has decreed many events, yet in such a way that he has also decreed the means necessary thereto. And should some one reply, the decrees of God are unchangeable, so that the things which he determines upon will come to pass, even without our prayers; we answer, the decrees of God are unchangeable not only as it respects the event or end, but also as it respects the means which lead to this end. God has decreed to give the end, but it is by the means which lead to it, which is with the condition that we desire and pray for it.

IV. Why is it added, As in heaven?

Christ adds the clause, *As in heaven* for these two reasons, 1. That he might set before us an example of perfection after which we should strive 2. That from the desire of perfection we might be assured that God will here grant unto us the commencement, and in the life to come the consummation of all that we desire in reference to his kingdom and will. "To him that hath shall be given." (Luke 8: 18.) The reason of both is this, that in heaven the will of God is done perfectly. Does any one ask by whom? We answer, 1. By the Son of God, who does all that the Father wills. "Lo I come, I delight to do thy will, O my God." "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (Ps. 40: 7, 8; John 6: 38.) 2. By the holy angels and blessed men. The will of God is done in heaven in such a way by the angels, that every one of them stands before God ready to do whatever he commands. They do the general and special will of God most promptly and cheerfully. No one declines or refuses to do the service which God requires from them—no one transcends the limits which God has prescribed, and in which he requires them to serve him—no one is ashamed to serve us; although we offend them and God by our sins. They are ministering spirits. (Heb. 1: 14.) It is in this way, therefore, we all desire, that we may also obey God and do his will on earth, as the holy angels do it in heaven.

Obj. Things which are impossible should not be desired. But to desire that the will of God may be done on earth, as in heaven, or that we may discharge our duty as the angels do in heaven, is impossible; yea, it is to desire and pray for that which is contrary to the will of God. Therefore it is not to be sought, since God designs that this shall be our state in the life to come, and not in the present state of being. Ans. In answering this objection we would make the following distinction in reference to the major proposition: Things which are impossible should not be desired, unless God designs to give them at length to those who desire them. But God wills to give the ability to perform obedience to this his will to such as desire it, in such a way that they commence this obedience in this life, and shall have it perfected in the life to come. The consummation of it is, therefore, to be ardently desired, whilst the impossibility of it should be patiently endured in this life. The consummation of it should also be desired that we may at length obtain it, since he who does not desire it will certainly never obtain it. It is one thing not to be able to obtain this consummation, and another thing not to desire it. We also deny the minor proposition, in which there is an error in regarding that as a cause which is no cause: for we do not desire and pray that the consummation of our obedience to God may be accomplished in this life; but that we may here have the commencement, the continuation and increase of this obedience in us, and that at length, after it has been gradually carried forward by constant progression and increase, it may be perfected, and that we may then do the will of God as fully and perfectly as the angels continually do it in heaven. Hence when we pray that the will of God may be done on earth as in heaven, the word *as*, does not refer to and signify the degree, but the kind of obedience, here alluded to; viz. the beginning of it; the desire and obtaining of which is not contrary to the divine decree. And as to the consummation of this obedience, it is

proper that we should every moment desire and pray that we may be wholly delivered from sin: for it is agreeable to the will of God that we should pray for this, even though he does not design to perfect it in this life. It is not proper for us to search and scrutinize into what God has decreed, when we have this rule prescribed, that we pray for things upon the condition of the will of God. We should therefore submit ourselves to the divine will, and pray for what God has commanded us to ask of him, whether he has decreed it, or not. God, for instance, wills the death of our parents, and yet he does not design that we should desire and pray for their death. So God also wills that the church should have her seasons of affliction and oppression, but does desire that we should pray for these afflictions, but for her deliverance, or that she may patiently submit to the afflictions which he sees fit to send upon her. So it is now in reference to the subject in hand. God does not design to give us perfect deliverance from sin in this life, and yet he wills that we should desire it and constantly pray that we may be wholly delivered from sin. There are, therefore, some things to be sought and prayed for, which God will not bring to pass; and on the other hand, there are some things which God designs to bring to pass, which we are not to desire and pray for, but patiently to endure, if they do come to pass. And yet in doing this, we do not pray contrary to the will of God, because we always submit ourselves to his will in our prayers.

FIFTIETH LORD'S DAY.

Question 125. Which is the fourth petition?

Answer. "GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD;" that is, be pleased to provide us with all things necessary for the body, that we may thereby acknowledge thee to be the only fountain of all good, and that neither our care nor industry, nor even thy gifts, can profit us without thy blessing, and therefore that we may withdraw our trust from all creatures, and place it alone in thee.

EXPOSITION.

This petition respecting our daily bread, it would seem should have been placed after the petition in which we pray for the forgiveness of our sins, inasmuch as such benefits as are most important should be prayed for first, whilst those which are less important should be sought last. But Christ having regard to our infirmities, placed this fourth petition respecting our daily bread, as it were in the middle of the prayer which he prescribed, that we might both commence and end our prayers with petitions for spiritual blessings as being most important; and that the obtaining and receiving of temporal benefits might confirm in us more and more a confidence of obtaining spiritual blessings.

In this fourth petition we are taught to pray for temporal blessings, concerning which we must enquire,

I. *Why temporal blessings should be prayed for:*
II. *In what manner they are to be sought:*
III. *Why Christ comprehends temporal blessings under the term* BREAD:
IV. *Why he calls it* OUR *bread:*
V. *Why he calls it* DAILY BREAD:
VI. *Why it should be given* DAILY:
VII. *Whether it is lawful for us to pray for riches:*
VIII. *Whether it is lawful to lay up any thing for the time to come.*

I. WHY TEMPORAL BLESSINGS SHOULD BE PRAYED FOR.

We should desire and pray for temporal blessings from God no less than such as are spiritual:

1. *On account of the command of God*, which of itself should be sufficient, even though we could assign no other reason. We have as a warrant for asking temporal blessings from God both a general and special command. Christ gives a general command when he says, "Ask and it shall be given you." (Matt. 7: 7.) We have also a special command uttered by Christ when he prescribed unto us this form of prayer, saying, "After this manner therefore pray ye;" in which he also commands us to ask bread, or temporal blessings from God. When Christ, therefore, commands us to take no thought in regard to what we shall eat, and says that all these things shall be added unto us, he does not design to forbid us to ask of God our daily bread, but condemns distrust, or a want of confidence in God. (Matt. 5: 31, 33.)

2. *On account of the divine promise.* God has promised to give us all things necessary for our life, and has promised them in order that we might desire and pray for them, and that we might have a firm confidence that we shall obtain things necessary for us, which confidence is spiritual and not carnal. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." (Matt. 6: 32.)

3. *On account of the glory of God.* This petition for temporal blessings is an acknowledgment and profession of the providence of God, especially towards the church. God desires that this praise should be given to him, inasmuch as he is the source of all good things, and that we may not suppose these things to come by mere chance.

4. *On account of our comfort;* that they may be expressions of God's good-will towards us, since good gifts — such as contribute to salvation, are promised and conferred only upon the children of God. Hence when these gifts are conferred upon us, we should comfort ourselves by believing that we are of the number of those to whom God has promised to grant these things.

5. *That the desire and expectation of these blessings* may be an exercise of our confidence and hope; for we cannot promise to ourselves temporal blessings, unless we are assured of spiritual blessings, and of God's good will towards us; neither can we desire and pray for temporal blessings from God, unless we are persuaded that we are in favor with him.

6. *On account of our necessity*, that we may be able to do the will of God on earth. This we cannot do without daily bread. "The dead praise not the Lord." (Ps. 115: 17.)

7. *That the desire of these things may be a confirmation to us*, and a profession before the world, that it is God who confers upon us even the smallest gifts.

8. *For this comfort*, that we may know that the church shall always be preserved on earth, since God always hears our prayers, and will constantly grant unto us our daily bread according to his promise.

II. In what manner temporal blessings are to be prayed for.

Temporal blessings are to be sought and prayed for, as well as other good things promised in the gospel:

1. *With confidence in the promise of God*, or from faith. If we offer up our prayers differently they are not heard, neither are the good things which we have, made contributary to our salvation.

2. *With the condition of the will of God;* that God would give us what we pray for, if it be pleasing to him, and as he knows they may contribute to our advantage and his glory; because he has promised these things not with any determined circumstances. God has not prescribed in his word, what temporal blessings he will confer upon us. It is different, however, as it respects spiritual blessings; for in reference to these God has expressly promised that he will give them to every one that asks.

3. *With confidence of being heard;* so that we believe that God will give us as much as is necessary to meet our wants.

4. *To this end*, that we may in the use of these things serve God and our neighbor, and not that they may contribute to our sensual desire.

Those who do not in this way desire these blessings are not heard; and although they may receive what they ask, yet God does not hear them, because the things which they receive are not made profitable to their salvation.

There are two reasons why God has not specified in his word what temporal blessings he will confer upon us, as the salvation of every one, and the manifestation of his own glory demands. 1. Because we are often ignorant what we should pray for, and what would be good for us. God knows best what blessings it is desirable that he should confer upon us, for the manifestation of his own glory and our salvation. As we, therefore, often err in asking temporal blessings, God confers only such upon us as he knows will be profitable for us. It is different, however, as it respects spiritual blessings; because these are all profitable unto us, and God has prescribed the way in which we are to pray for them, so that we cannot err in desiring them. For what God has positively promised, that we ought to desire positively; and what he has specially and simply promised, that we should seek and pray for in the same way. So we should simply desire and pray for the Holy Ghost, because God has simply and expressly promised to give the Holy Ghost to every one that asks. 2. That we may learn to be contented with those things which we have received from God, and always submit our will to the will of God.

III. Why Christ comprehends temporal blessings under the term Bread.

1. Christ, by a synecdoche which is common in the Hebrew language, comprehends under the term bread all temporal blessings, and such as are

necessary for the sustenance of life, as food, raiment, health, civil peace, &c. This is evident from the design of the petition, for we pray for bread from our necessity. But there are many other things besides bread necessary for us. Therefore we pray for them also under the term bread. This synecdoche so common in the Hebrew language, often occurs in the Bible; as, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." "He that did eat of my bread hath lifted up his heel against me." (Gen. 3: 19. Ps. 41: 9.) Nor did Christ merely comprehend under the term bread, things necessary for the sustenance of life, but he also comprises such a use of these things as is profitable; for bread, apart from such a use, is no better than a stone.

2. Christ furthermore comprehends all temporal blessings under the term bread, 1. That he might restrain our desires, and teach us to pray only for such things as are necessary for the support of life, and for the service of God and our neighbor, both in our common and proper calling. 2. That he might teach us to pray not only for such things as are necessary, but also that the use of them might be made profitable to us, and tend to our salvation, inasmuch as these things profit us nothing without such a use.

Bread, now, is made profitable to us, 1. If we pray for it and receive it with faith, or with the intention—after the manner and to the end which God directs, which requires that we look in the exercise of faith to God, the author and giver of all good things. 2. If we desire that God will give with the bread which we receive the virtue and power of nourishing and preserving our bodies, which requires that we do not merely pray for bread itself, but also for the blessing of God; for if God does not bless us in that which we receive, all our cares and labors are vain, and the gifts of God themselves are therefore useless and hurtful according to the threatening, "I will break the staff of your bread." (Lev. 26: 26.)

We may now easily see what we desire when we pray for bread, viz: 1. Not great riches, but only such things as are necessary for us. 2. That these things may be to us bread, or be made profitable and salutary by the blessing of God, without which bread is not bread, but becomes as it were a stone or poison; for he who gives bread that it may not profit him that receives it any more than if it were a stone, gives a stone and not bread. Such, now, are the blessings which the wicked receive from God, and take as it were to themselves.

IV. Why does Christ call it our bread?

Christ commands us to pray for *our bread*, and not for mine, or thine, or any other man's, 1. That we may desire those things which are given to us of God; for the bread which God gives us as necessary for the support of life is, and is made ours when it is given unto us. This petition, therefore, *Give us our bread*, signifies, Give us, O God, the bread allotted to us, and which thou dost design shall be ours. God, as a householder, distributes to every one his own portion, or that which we deserve at his hands. 2. That we may desire things necessary, acquired by lawful labor in some honest and proper calling, pleasing to God and profitable to society at large, or that we may receive what we ask at the hands of God by ordinary means and lawful ways, the hand of God reaching them to us from heaven. "This we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he

eat." "Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good." (2 Thes. 3 : 10. Eph. 4 : 28.) 3. That we may use them with a good conscience and with thanksgiving. For God desires that we should take unto ourselves the assurance that when he gives us these things he also grants unto us the privilege of enjoying his gifts. God desires that we should use his gifts, not as thieves and robbers, but cheerfully and with thanksgiving.

V. Why does Christ call it daily bread?

Christ calls the bread which we are commanded to ask of God, *daily bread*, 1. Because he will have us to ask daily as much as we need for each day. 2. Because he would restrain our raging and boundless desires. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." "There is no want to them that fear him." (Matt. 6 : 32. Ps. 37 : 16 ; 34 : 9.) Hence the petition, *Give us our daily bread*, means, Give us as much bread as is sufficient for us — give us so much of what is necessary for the support of life as every one of us needs, to serve thee and our neighbor in our several callings in life.

VI. Why does Christ add, This day?

Christ adds the phrase, *This day*, 1. That he might meet and guard against our distrust and covetousness, and keep us from both these vices. 2. That we might depend upon him alone, as yesterday, so this day and to-morrow, and always expect the necessaries of life from the hands of God, that we may know that they are not obtained by our own hands, or labor, or diligence, but that God confers them upon us, and that we may know that even though we receive them, yet they will not profit our bodies, if the blessing of God does not accompany them. 3. That the exercise of faith and prayer may always be continued in us ; for as long as it is said, *This day*, so long does Christ design that prayer should be continued, that we may yield obedience to the command *to pray always*. (2 Thes. 5 : 17.)

VII. Is it lawful for us to pray for riches?

This, in connection with the following question, naturally grows out of what we have already said in reference to this petition ; for when we are commanded to pray only for our *daily bread*, and that, too, *this day*, it would seem at first view that it is not lawful either to desire riches, or to lay anything by for to-morrow. It is, however, certainly right and proper to desire riches, if we remove all ambiguity from the word, and understand by it things which are necessary for the support of life. It was in this way also that Epicurus defined riches "*to be a poverty adapted to the law of nature.*" This is a good definition of the term ; for they are to be considered truly rich, who enjoy a sufficient amount of the things necessary for the support of life, and are contented therewith. If we, therefore, understand the term riches as just defined, they are certainly to be sought and prayed for at the hands of God, inasmuch as we are to desire such things as are necessary for nature, and for the position and office which God has assigned us

in life. And the reason is, that these necessary things, or riches, are the daily bread which we are commanded to ask and pray for at the hands of God. There are others, again, who define the term differently, understanding by it *an abundance and plenty over and above what is necessary.* So Crœsus, surnamed the Rich, said, "*That no one is rich, unless he was able to support an army by his revenue.*" In this sense, riches are never to be asked of God, seeing that this is not to pray for our daily bread. Solomon says, in the person of all the godly, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," (Prov. 30: 8); by which words the Holy Ghost teaches that riches, when understood to mean an abundance over and above what is necessary, are to be deprecated by us. The declaration of the Apostle Paul, in his first Epistle to Tim. 6: 9, is also here in point, where he says, "They that will be rich fall into temptations and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." Christ also calls riches thorns, which we cannot handle without exposing ourselves to the danger of being pricked thereby. (Matt. 13: 22.) But, on the other hand, godliness is great gain, if a man be contented with what he has. (1 Tim. 6: 6.) Should God, however, give us anything besides what is actually necessary for us, we should use these things properly, or reserve them for purposes good and necessary; for Christ commanded the disciples to gather up the fragments, that nothing might be lost. (John 6: 12.) We have also a remarkable example in the person of Joseph, who, being warned of the approaching famine, gathered and laid by provisions in the time of plenty, for the years of scarcity and dearth which were to come upon the land of Egypt. (Gen. 41: 48.) But here care must be taken: 1. That we do not repose our trust in them. "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." (Ps. 62: 10.) 2. That we avoid luxury and every abuse of the gifts of God. 3. We should regard ourselves as stewards of God, who has committed these riches to our charge for the purpose of being properly expended, and has imposed upon us the duty of administering them so as to promote his glory, and that we shall at some time be required to render an account to God for our stewardship and administration.

VIII. Is it lawful for us to lay anything by for the time to come?

That it is right and proper for us to lay something by for the time to come, may be inferred from the command of Christ, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." (John 6: 12.) The same thing is also taught by the word *our*, as it is here used. For we are required to aid and contribute to the support of the commonwealth, and to give to the poor as opportunity presents itself. This, however, we cannot do, unless we lay something of our own by, so that we may have something to give whenever any occasion calls for the exercise of our liberality. We may here appropriately refer to all the precepts and rules which the Scriptures give respecting parsimony and frugality, which virtues are employed in keeping and profitably disposing of things honestly acquired for one's own use, and for the benefit of his friends, so as to avoid all sumptuousness, prodigality, luxury and waste of the gifts of God. The Apostle Paul teaches that it is the duty of parents to lay something in store for their

children, when he says, "The children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children." (2 Cor. 12: 14.)

These three things should, however, be observed in laying up possessions for the time to come: 1. That the things which are laid by in store be lawfully gotten, having been acquired by honest and lawful labor. 2. That we do not repose our confidence in them. 3. That they be preserved for lawful and necessary purposes, both as it respects ourselves and others: such as a proper support for our own life and for our families; for the preservation of the church and state, and for administering to the wants of the poor and needy, concerning which we may cite the following passages of Scripture: "Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery; if riches increase, set not your heart upon them." "Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Ps. 62: 11. Eph. 4: 28.)

We may now easily return an answer to the objections which are brought against this petition.

Obj. 1. It is not necessary to desire and pray for what is ours. Daily bread is ours. Therefore we need not desire it from God. Ans. There are here four terms arising from the ambiguity of the word *our*, which in the major proposition signifies a thing which we have in our own power; whilst in the minor it signifies a thing which becomes ours by the gift of God, or which we obtain from God by prayer, as we have already shown.

Obj. 2. It is not necessary that we should labor for that which is obtained not by labor, but by prayer. Our daily bread is obtained not by labor but by prayer. Therefore we should not labor for it, but merely pray. Ans. There is here an error in regarding that as absolutely true, which is true only in part. Those things which are simply not obtained by labor, neither as a cause nor as the necessary means, for these it is to no purpose that we labor. But although our labor is not necessary, for the purpose of obtaining temporal benefits, as the whole or principal efficient cause, yet it is, nevertheless, necessary as a means instituted by God, according as it is said, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground." "This we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." (Gen. 3: 19. 2 Thes. 3: 10.) God gives all things freely, but not without labor and prayer on our part.

Obj. 3. Christ here commands us to pray for our daily bread, and this day and not to-morrow. Therefore it is not lawful to lay anything in store for the time to come. Why, then, does Paul say that the parents ought to lay up for their children? (2 Cor. 12: 14.) Ans. This objection is of no account, inasmuch as it regards that as a cause which is none. Christ commands us to pray for our daily bread, and this day. Hence, we are to ask that which is necessary for every day, this day, to-morrow, and as long as we live. We are, therefore, not to understand Christ as teaching that he will not have us to labor for the morrow, or that we are not to lay anything by for the future, or that we are to cast away those things which God has already given us, as sufficient for the time to come; for his object is to remove from us distrust, covetousness, and an unrighteous acquisition of goods, and disobedience. He does indeed say, in another place, "Take no thought for the morrow" (Matt. 6: 34); but his meaning evidently is, that we should not think of the morrow with distrust, as though

God would then give us nothing, or as though it would not be necessary for us to pray. He does not, therefore, forbid labor and prayer, but merely distrust, and a want of confidence in God.

FIFTY-FIRST LORD'S DAY.

Question 126. What is the fifth petition?

Answer. "AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS, AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS;" that is, be pleased for the sake of Christ's blood not to impute to us, poor sinners, our transgressions, nor that depravity which always cleaves to us; even as we feel this evidence of thy grace in us, that it is our firm resolution from the heart to forgive our neighbor.

EXPOSITION.

Cyprian correctly and piously observes, respecting the order and argument of this fifth petition, that we pray for the pardon and forgiveness of our sins, after praying for a supply of food, that he who is fed by God, may live in God; nor do we merely have regard for this present, temporal life, but also for that which is eternal, to which all those attain whose sins are pardoned. This same Father likewise observes, that this petition is a remarkable and free confession of the church, in which she acknowledges and deplores her sins, and is at the same time a comfort that the church shall receive the forgiveness of sins according to the promise of Christ; and also binds us to extend forgiveness to our neighbor. Christ, therefore, by this petition wills, 1. That we acknowledge our sins. 2. That we thirst and long after the forgiveness of sins, inasmuch as this is granted to none but such as desire it, and who do not trample under foot the blood of the Son of God. 3. That our faith may be exercised, seeing that this petition springs from faith, and also confirms faith. For faith is the cause of prayer, and prayer is the cause of faith as it respects the increase thereof.

The principal questions which claim our attention, in connection with this petition, are the following:

I. *What does Christ mean by debts?*
II. *What is it to forgive debts or sins?*
III. *Why is the forgiveness of sins to be prayed for?*
IV. *How are sins remitted unto us, or what is the meaning of the clause, As we forgive our debtors?*

I. WHAT DOES CHRIST MEAN BY DEBTS?

Christ comprises under the term *debts* all our sins, original as well as actual, including sins of ignorance, of omission and commission, as he himself explains it in Luke 11: 4, where he says, "*Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.* They are called debts, because they make us debtors to God both in respect to the obedience which we have failed to render, and also to the punishment which we are

bound to pay in consequence thereof: for when we sin we neither give, nor perform to God, what we owe him; and as long as we do not yield this to him, so long do we remain debtors to God, and are bound to make satisfaction by punishment. "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them." (Deut. 27: 26.) From this state of condemnation we could never be delivered, if God did not remit unto us our sins.

II. What is it to remit debts, or to forgive sins?

A creditor is said to forgive a debtor when he does not demand from him that which he owes him, but blots his account from his books, without exacting any punishment, as though it had been paid, as we may learn from the parable of the king who in view of the entreaties of the servant that owed him ten thousand talents, forgave him the debt. (Matt. 18: 27.) So God forgives our debts, when he does not lay them to our account, nor punish us on account of them, and that because he has punished them in his Son, our Mediator. This, therefore, is what we are to understand by the forgiveness of sins, That God does not impute any sin to us, but graciously receives us into his favor, declares us righteous and regards us as his children out of his mere grace and mercy for the sake of the satisfaction which Christ made in our behalf, imputed unto us and apprehended of us by faith; and that he will, therefore, not punish us on account of our sins, but grants unto us righteousness and eternal life, since the remission of sin does away with the punishment of sin; for sin and punishment are correlatives. When sin is introduced or committed, punishment follows; but when it is taken away, punishment is at the same time removed.

Obj. To remit sin is not to impute it, nor to be willing to punish it in us. But this is inconsistent with the justice of God. Therefore when we pray that God will remit sin, we desire that he will act contrary to the order of his justice. Ans. We deny the consequence; because the order of divine justice is not violated when God pardons sin, except he pardons it without any satisfaction being made. But it is not in this way that we pray for the forgiveness of sins, inasmuch as we desire it on account of the satisfaction of Christ. Hence when our sins are remitted there is no wrong done to the order of divine justice, as it is not done without satisfaction having been made. And if some should reply, that God does not graciously and freely remit our sins, if he does it in view of a recompense having been made; we answer that they are forgiven in view of a recompense having been made, and, therefore, not freely in respect to Christ, but freely in respect to us, since he does not receive satisfaction from us, but from Christ. And if it should still further be objected, That remission of sins is not granted freely, since we have merited it in Christ; we answer, that the merit on account of which our sins are pardoned is not ours, but Christ's, who was given by the Father freely for us, and merited this forgiveness for us without the intervention of any desert on our part, and that this his merit is freely imputed unto us. Hence our sins are graciously forgiven on account of the merit of Christ, from which it is correctly inferred that they are not imputed unto us on account of the satisfaction of Christ. For we do not desire that God would act contrary to his justice, and that he would not regard us as sinners; but that he would impute unto us the righteousness of another, even the righteousness of Christ, with

which our sins are covered. To express it more briefly we would say; God remits our sins freely, 1. Because he does not demand any satisfaction from us. 2. Because he freely gave his Son, in whom he made satisfaction. 3. Because he graciously gives and imputes the satisfaction of his Son to such as believe.

III. Why should we desire the forgiveness of sins?

We should desire and pray for the forgiveness of sins, 1. On account of our salvation, that we may be saved: for without the forgiveness of sins, we cannot be saved. Neither does God confer this benefit upon any, but such as desire it. 2. That we may be admonished, and reminded of the remains of sin which still cleave even to the most holy in this life, and that our repentance may thus become more earnest and deep. 3. That we may desire and receive the former blessings; because, without the remission of sins, these blessings are either not given, or else they are given to their destruction. So the wicked often receive these gifts; but not to their salvation; for they rather contribute to their condemnation.

Obj. It is not necessary that we should desire and pray for what we have. The godly have the remission of their sins. Therefore there is no need that they should desire it. Ans. The godly do, indeed, enjoy the forgiveness of sins, but not wholly, and that too not in respect to the continuance, but merely as it respects the beginning thereof. This forgiveness should without doubt be continued, inasmuch as sins are continually found even in the regenerate. God does also continue it in all those to whom he forgives sin in his Son, but with the condition that we daily desire this continuance. Hence, although God has forgiven our sins for Christ's sake, yet he nevertheless designs that we should pray for their forgiveness. It is for this reason that we pray that God would forgive us the sins which we now, or may hereafter commit.

IV. How are sins remitted unto us, or why is it added, As we forgive our debtors?

Our sins are so remitted unto us, as we also forgive our debtors, which clause is added by Christ, 1. That we may rightly desire and pray for the forgiveness of our sins, and may, therefore, come before God in true faith and penitence, the sign of which is love to our neighbor. 2. On account of our comfort; that we may be assured of the forgiveness of our sins, when we extend forgiveness to others for the sins which they may have committed against us; and may have the assurance that we are acceptable to God, although there are many remains of sin still within us.

Obj. 1. He is not pardoned who himself does not forgive. We do not forgive. Therefore we are not forgiven. Ans. He who does not forgive fully and perfectly, does, nevertheless, obtain forgiveness, if he does but forgive truly and sincerely. Therefore forgiveness shall also be extended to us, if we forgive truly and sincerely.

Obj. 2. Christ commands us to pray that God will forgive our sins as we forgive our debtors. But we do not perfectly forgive our debtors. Therefore we, according to this petition, pray that God will not perfectly forgive us our sins, which is to desire our destruction since God will con-

demn even the smallest sin. Ans. This is to put a false construction upon the words of Christ; for the particle *as*, as used in this petition, does not signify the degree of forgiveness, or teach that the forgiveness which we extend to others is equal to that which God extends to us; but it signifies the kind of forgiveness, or the truth and sincerity of the forgiveness which we and God extend, that God will as truly forgive us as we certainly and truly forgive our neighbor from the heart; or to express it more briefly, we may say, that there is here not a comparison according to the degrees, but according to the truth and reality of the thing, so that the sense is, God so perfectly forgives us our sins as, we truly and certainly forgive our neighbor.

Obj. 3. But Christ commands us in Luke to pray; *forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.* (Luke 11: 4.) Therefore our forgiveness is the cause on account of which God forgives us. Ans. But this is to consider that as a cause which is none. Our forgiveness is not meritorious, or the cause of divine forgiveness, but is merely an argument and proof that God has forgiven us our sins, since we have forgiven others, if not perfectly, yet still truly and sincerely. Our forgiveness cannot be the cause of the forgiveness of God, 1. Because it is imperfect. 2. Because if it were even perfect it could still not merit any thing for the reason that what we now do, we owe to God. If we were now to perform perfect obedience, it would still be due to God. Yet we must not understand this as signifying an equality of forgiveness in us and God, but only as referring to a comparison of the kind of forgiveness.

Obj. 4. He does not truly forgive who retains a recollection of injuries, and is desirous of taking revenge. But we all have a recollection of injuries, and are desirous of taking revenge. Therefore we do not truly forgive. Ans. He does not truly forgive who retains a recollection of injuries without showing any signs of disapprobation, or making any resistance thereto. And although we may scarcely be able to bury all remembrance of offences, or at least not without the greatest difficulty, yet if we only do not cherish it, but resist the remains of sin which still cleave to us, and do not give indulgence to them, there is nothing which may prevent us from truly and heartily forgiving others, and of obtaining that also on account of which Christ has added the particle *as*, which is, as has already been remarked, that we might rightly pray to God, which takes place whenever we pray in faith and repentance, both of which are confirmed in us by this petition. *Faith* is strengthened and confirmed in us by this petition, because when we truly extend forgiveness to our neighbor, we may and ought certainly to believe, that our sins are also forgiven us, so that we have a good conscience and are sure of being heard, according to the promise of Christ, "If ye forgive men their tresspasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (Matt. 6: 14.) *True repentance* is in like manner confirmed and increased within us by this petition, since it was chiefly to lead and provoke us to this, that the condition was added, *As we forgive our debtors.* For if we would obtain forgiveness for ourselves we must also extend forgiveness to others. Both causes are contained in the words of Christ as just cited, "If ye forgive men their tresspasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you;" that is, then you may certainly believe that you will be heard of your Father in heaven, which words comprehend a confirmation of our faith; whilst the antithesis, which follows, adds a spur, or provokes to

repentance: "But if ye forgive not men their tresspasses, neither will your Father forgive your tresspasses." (Matt. 6: 15.)

Obj. 5. But Paul did not forgive Alexander, for he says, 2 Tim. 2: 4, "Alexander, the copper-smith, did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works." Yet he obtained forgiveness of God. Therefore our forgiveness is not necessary in order that we may obtain the forgiveness of God.

Ans. Forgiveness is three-fold. 1. *Of revenge.* This pertains to all men; inasmuch as all ought to forgive revenge. It is of this that this petition speaks, and this Paul forgave Alexander. 2. *Of punishment.* This all cannot forgive as all cannot inflict punishment. Neither ought the magistrate to whom it belongs to inflict punishment, to remit it except for just and weighty reasons; for God desires that his justice and law should be put into execution. This Paul also forgave Alexander in as far as it had respect to him. Yet he at the same time desired that he should be punished of God, in case he would persist in sin. 3. *Of judgment in reference to others.* This should not always be remitted; for God, who prohibits falsehood, will not have us to judge of knaves as honest men, but designs that we should distinguish the good from the bad. Christ enjoins the same thing, when he says, "Give not that which is holy to the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." "Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." (Matt. 7: 6: 10: 16.) Paul did not, therefore, sin in entertaining an opinion of Alexander, as a wicked man, as long as he did not repent of his wickedness.

FIFTY-SECOND LORD'S DAY

Question 127. Which is the sixth petition?

Answer. "AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL;" that is, since we are so weak in ourselves that we cannot stand a moment: and besides this, since our mortal enemies, the devil, the world, and our own flesh, cease not to assault us, do thou, therefore, preserve and strengthen us by the power of thy Holy Spirit, that we may not be overcome in this spiritual warfare, but constantly and strenuously may resist our foes, until at last we obtain a complete victory.

EXPOSITION.

There are some who here make one petition; while others make two. We should not, however, strive or contend, in reference to the matter as long as the doctrine which is here taught is fully retained. To us the words seem rather to constitute two parts of one and the same petition. *Lead us not into temptation*, is a petition for deliverance from future evil; but *deliver us from evil*, is a petition for deliverance from present evil.

The things which we are here to consider are the following:

I. *What is temptation?*
II. *What is it to lead into temptation?*
III. *What is it to deliver from evil?*
IV. *Why is this petition necessary?*

I. What is Temptation?

There are two kinds of temptation. The one is from God, the other is from the devil. *The former* is a trial of our faith, piety, repentance and obedience, which is from God, through the various oppositions and hinderances of our salvation; as by all evils, by the devil, the flesh, lusts, the world, afflictions, calamities, the cross, &c., that our faith, patience, hope and constancy may be made manifest both to ourselves and others. It is in this sense that God is said to have tempted Abraham, Joseph, Job and David. "The Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." (Deut. 13: 4. See also Gen. 22: 1. Ps. 139: 1.) So God is also said to tempt his people by false prophets and by the cross. *The temptation of the devil*, or that by which the devil, the flesh and the wicked tempt us, is every solicitation to do wrong, which solicitation itself is sin. It was in this way that the devil tempted Job, that he might draw him from God, whom he loved and worshipped, although the final issue of the temptation was different from what the devil designed, and anticipated. So he also provoked David to number the children of Israel. (1 Chron. 21: 1.)

Obj. But it is said in the Epistle of James 1: 13, "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." Ans. God tempts no one by soliciting and enticing him to sin or evil: but he tempts by trying us. But the devil, the world and the flesh tempt us so as to entice and solicit us to sin for the purpose of drawing us from God. In this sense of the term God tempts no man. Hence, when it is said that he tempted Abraham, Job and David, we are to understand it to mean nothing more than a trial of their faith and constancy by afflictions and the cross. So he, also, by the use of the same means tries our faith, hope, patience, love and constancy, whether we will also worship and serve him in afflictions.

From what has now been said we may easily perceive, since temptation is attributed to the devil, and to the disordered inclinations of men, in what sense God is said to tempt and not to tempt men. Satan tempts men, both by offering occasions to sin from without, and also by instigating them from within to sin, that he may thus plunge them into destruction, and cast reproach upon God. *Disordered inclinations* tempt men; because they tend to such actions as God prohibits. God, however, tempts, not to destroy us, nor to lead us into sin; but to try and exercise us, when he either sends calamities upon us, or permits the devil, or men, or our flesh to provoke and invite us to sin, hiding for a time his grace and power in preserving and ruling us, that our faith and constancy, by these exercises and trials, may be more clearly manifested, not indeed to God, who knows from everlasting what and how great our faith is, and how great it will hereafter be by his blessing; but to ourselves and others, that so by these examples of our deliverance there may be confirmed in us a confidence of the divine presence and protection—that a desire of imitating us may be awakened in others, by seeing our perseverance, and that true gratitude may be kindled in all of us towards God, who has delivered us from our temptations. It was in this way that God tempted Abraham when he commanded him to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice. Gen. 22. So he is said to have tempted

his people by withholding water from them. Ex. 15. This petition, therefore, *Lead us not into temptation*, which Christ commands us to address to God, does not simply speak of the trials and proofs of our faith and piety, to which David willingly offers himself, when he says, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts;" but also of the cunning devices and assaults of the devil and of our flesh, and of desertion in external and internal conflicts. Nor does the Apostle James speak of our being tried, but of our being enticed to sin, when he says, "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1: 13—16.)

Hence it is also apparent, how God punishes the wicked, and chastises and tempts the godly by evil spirits, whilst he is, nevertheless, not the cause of the sins which are committed by the devil, nor is a partaker with him in his wickedness. For that the wicked are punished by the wicked, and the good chastised and exercised, is the just and holy work of the divine will; but that the wicked execute the judgment of God by sinning, is not the fault of God, but comes to pass by the corruption of the wicked, which they have brought upon themselves. God neither willing, nor approving, nor accomplishing, nor furthering their sins, but only permitting them in his just judgment, when accomplishing his work and purpose through them, he either does not reveal his will to them, or does not influence their wills to regard his revealed will as the end and rule of their actions. This distinction between the works of God, and those of the devil, and of God's accomplishing his just work through the devil, and of his permitting the sin of the devil, is evidently confirmed by the history of Job, whom God designed to try, whilst the devil attempted to destroy him. The same thing is also proven by the history of Ahab, and by the prophecy respecting antichrist, where the devil deceives men that he may destroy them, whilst God permits them to be deceived that he may in this way punish them, and suffers the devil to execute his will and purpose. (1 Kings 23. 2 Thes. 2.)

II. What is it to lead into Temptation?

When God is said to lead us into temptation, we are to understand by it, that he tries and proves us according to his most just will and judgment. When the devil is said to lead us into temptation, it means that God permits him to entice and solicit us to sin. We are here in this petition taught to pray for deliverance from both of these forms of temptation. We therefore pray, 1. That God will not tempt us for the sake of trying us, if such be his will and pleasure, or if he does tempt us, that he will give us strength to endure the temptation. 2. That he will not permit the devil, or the world or the flesh to entice us to sin, or if he does permit us to be tempted, that he himself will be present with us, that we may not fall into sin. This, therefore, is the true sense and meaning of this petition, *Lead us not into temptation*—suffer us not to be tempted above that which we are able to bear; neither permit the devil to tempt us in such a way that we may either sin, or wholly fall from thee.

Obj. Temptations which are good in respect to God, are evil in respect

to the devil, and yet God, notwithstanding, leads us into them. Therefore God is the cause of sin. Ans. There is here a fallacy of the accident. They are sins in respect to the devil, because he designs to entice us to sin by these temptations. In respect to God, however, they are not sins, because they try us and withdraw us from sin, and also confirm our faith. Temptations, therefore, in as far as they are trials, chastisements, martyrdoms, &c., are sent of God; but in as far as they are evil and sinful, God does not will them, so as to approve and effect them, but only permits them.

III. What is it, to deliver us from evil?

There are some who understand by the term evil as here used, the devil; others understand by it, sin, and others, death. It is best, however, to understand it as comprehending all the evils of guilt and punishment, whether they be present or future; yea, and the devil himself, the author and grand contriver of all wicked deeds, who is called by the Apostle John, according to a significant form of speech, *the wicked one.* "I write unto you young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one." "Whatsoever is more than these, cometh of Evil." (1 John 2: 13. Matt. 5: 37.) Cyprian understood the term evil as here used, to include all the adverse circumstances which the enemy brings against us, from which we can have no sure protection, except God deliver us. Hence when we pray that God will deliver us from evil, we desire, 1. That he will send no evil upon us, but keep and defend us from present and future evils, both of guilt and punishment. 2. That if he does here send evils upon us, he will be pleased to mitigate them, and make them contribute to our salvation that they may be profitable to us. 3. That he will at length fully and perfectly deliver us in the life to come, and wipe away all tears from our eyes.

IV. Why is this petition necessary?

This petition is necessary, 1. On account of the number and power of our enemies, together with the magnitude of the evils to which we are exposed, and our own weakness. 2. On account of the preceding petition, that we may obtain the forgiveness of our sins, inasmuch as our sins are not forgiven except we continue in faith and repentance. But we will not continue in these, if we are tempted above our strength, if we rush into sin, and fall from God himself.

Obj. 1. We should not pray for deliverance from things good and profitable to us. The temptations which are from God, such as trials by afflictions, poverty, false prophets, &c., are things good and profitable to us. Therefore we should not pray for deliverance from them. Ans. We are not to pray for deliverance from things which are in themselves good and profitable. But trials, afflictions, crosses and other temptations are profitable not in themselves, but only by an accident, which is the mercy of God accompanying them, without which they are not only not profitable, but constitute a part of death and lead to death, both temporal and eternal. Hence in as far as afflictions are evil in themselves, and destructive to our nature, in so far we are to pray for a deliverance from them; but in as far as they are by the goodness of God, good and profitable to those who believe, we should not desire to be delivered from them. Or we may express it thus;

that which is good, and which accompanies afflictions and the cross, we should not pray for deliverance from; but afflictions and the cross itself, which are evil in themselves, being destructive to our nature, from these we should pray for deliverance, as Christ himself also prayed when he said, *Let this cup pass from me*, that is, let it pass from me in as far as it is a destruction and evil, in which sense the Father himself did not desire it. But in as far as the death of Christ was a ransom for the sins of his people, in so far both Christ and the Father desired it; "Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matt. 26: 39.)

Obj. 2. We ought not to pray for deliverance from what God wills. But God wills our temptations. Therefore we ought not to pray for deliverance from them. Ans. We ought not to pray for deliverance from what God wills, in as far as he simply wills it. But he does not simply will temptations—he does not will them in as far as they are destructive to us; but only in as far as they are trials and exercises of our faith, prayer and constancy. In this respect we ought also to desire these things. And that we ought not simply to desire temptations is evident from this, that it is the part of patience to endure and submit to them, which it would not be (but rather our duty) if we should simply desire them, without being permitted to pray for deliverance from them. God will not, therefore, have us to desire evils in as far as they are evils, but will have us patiently to endure them in as far as they are good and profitable to us.

Obj. 3. It is in vain that we pray for what we never obtain. But we shall never obtain a complete deliverance from temptations in this life; for "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3: 12.) Therefore it is in vain that we pray not to be led into temptation. Ans. There is here an error in regarding that as a cause which is none: for we pray that we may not be led into temptation, not because we are here wholly to be delivered from temptations; but because we are dilivered from many temptations and evils in which we should have perished, had we not sought and prayed for deliverance. This should be a sufficient reason why we should pray as we are here taught. But we may add still further, that this petition is necessary, in order that the evils into which we fall may be made contributary to our salvation. Those now who desire deliverance in general, obtain these two great blessings from God, notwithstanding he designs that this benefit be imperfect, even to those who desire it, on account of the remains of sin, which still cleave to us; and that because he will have us to pray with confidence, and submission to his will, that we may obtain it fully and perfectly in the life to come.

The benefit of this petition is, 1. *A confession of* our weakness in enduring temptations, even the smallest, that no one may be unduly exalted and filled with conceit, as Peter was, when he declared himself willing to die with Christ; and that no one may take to himself the glory of his confession and sufferings, seeing that the Lord himself teaches us humility, saying, "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." (Matt. 26: 41. 1 Cor. 10: 12.) 2. *A declaration* of the miseries and evils of this present life, that we may not become secure, and fall in love with the world. 3. *An acknowledgement and confession of the providence of God*, which, as Cyprian writes, teaches that the devil can effect nothing against us, except God first give him permission; which should lead us to reverence and

fear God, since the wicked one can accomplish nothing in all our temptations, except God give him power to do so. God now grants Satan power over us according as we permit sin to reign in us, as it is said, "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the Lord: he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were obedient to his law." (Is. 42: 24.) This power too which is given to Satan is two-fold; either for our punishment when we sin against God, or for our glory when we are tried and exposed. This is Cyprian's view of the subject.

It is proper that we should here notice the order and connection between the different petitions which we have now considered. 1. The Lord commands us to seek the true knowledge or profession of God, which is the cause of all his other blessings. 2. That God would rule us by his Spirit, and so continually confirm and preserve us in this knowledge. 3. That every one may by this means properly discharge his duty in his appropriate sphere and calling. 4. That he would give us those temporal blessings necessary, that every one may perform his duty. The fourth petition, therefore, agrees with the preceding, for if it is necessary that we should all be in our proper calling, we must live and have what is necessary for the support of life. 5. The petition for temporal and spiritual blessings follows next in order, and is thrown in to meet our unworthiness: That thou mayest give us temporal and spiritual blessings, *forgive us our debts.* The fifth petition is, therefore, the foundation of the rest. If this be overthrown, the rest will likewise fall to the ground. For if any one has not the assurance that God is reconciled to him, how can he know him to be merciful? How can he continue in that knowledge which he has not? How can he do his duty and the will of God, when he is the enemy of God and desires contrary to his will? How can the gifts of God contribute to his salvation? 6. After the petition for temporal and spiritual blessings, the petition for deliverance from present and future evils follows, being the last. From this last petition we return again to the first; Deliver us from all the evils of guilt and punishment, present and future, that we may know thee, our perfect Saviour, that so thy name may be sanctified by us.

Question 128. How dost thou conclude thy prayer?

Answer. "FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY, FOR EVER;" that is, all these we ask of thee, because thou art our King, and Almighty, art willing and able to give us all good; and all this we pray for, that thereby not we, but thy holy name, may be glorified forever."

EXPOSITION.

This conclusion contributes to the confirmation of our faith, or to our confidence of being heard, seeing that God is willing and able to grant what we desire and pray for at his hands.

Thine is the kingdom.—The first reason is drawn from the duty of a king, which is to hear, defend and preserve his subjects. Therefore, thou,

O God, since thou art our king, more powerful than all enemies, having all things in thy power, both good and evil—evil, so that thou art able to restrain and repress them; good, so that there is no blessing so great that thou canst not give, if it be agreeable to our nature; since we are thy subjects, be present with us by thy power and save us, seeing thou hast a love for thy subjects and canst preserve and defend them.

And the power. The second reason is drawn from the power of God. Hear us, O God, and grant us all that we pray for, since thou art able, and thou alone; for this power rests in thee alone, being joined with infinite goodness.

And the glory. The third reason is from the end or final cause. We ask these things for thy glory. We desire and look for all good things from thee, the only true and sovereign God: We profess and acknowledge thee as the author and fountain of all good things; and because this glory is due thee, we therefore desire these things from thee. Therefore hear us for thy glory: for this petition and expectation of all good things from thee is nothing else than an ascription of honor and glory to thee. Hear us especially since thou wilt grant us the things which we desire. Thou wilt do what contributes to thy glory. What we desire and pray for contributes to thy glory. Therefore thou wilt grant it unto us. Give us, therefore, what we pray for, and the glory shall redound to thee, if thou deliver us: for so shall thy kingdom, power and glory be manifested.

Obj. We seem to bring persuasive arguments to God, by which we may constrain and influence him to do for us what we pray for. But it is in vain that we use arguments with him who is unchangeable. God is unchangeable. Therefore it is in vain that we thus plead with him. Ans. We grant the argument as it respects God, but not as it respects us. Or we may reply that there is here an error in taking that as a cause which is none. We do not use arguments that we may move and influence God, or persuade him to do what we ask; but that we ourselves may be persuaded that God will do this—that we may be assured of being heard, and acknowledge our necessity, and the goodness and truth of God. These arguments are, therefore, not added to our prayers for the purpose of moving and influencing God; but merely to confirm and assure us, that God will do what we desire and pray for. These now are the reasons on account of which he does it: *Thou art the best king.* Therefore thou wilt give to thy subjects what is necessary and tends to their salvation. *Thou art most powerful.* Therefore thou wilt show thy power in giving these greatest of all gifts, which can be given by no one, beside thee. *It shall contribute to thy glory.* Therefore thou wilt do it: because thou hast a regard to thy glory.

Question 129. What doth the word "AMEN" signify?

Answer. "AMEN" signifies it shall truly and certainly be; for my prayer is more assuredly heard of God than I feel in my heart I desire these things of him.

EXPOSITION.

The word Amen is not added, as a part of the prayer; but is connected with it to denote, 1. A true and sincere desire that we may be heard, that the thing which we desire and pray for may be ratified and certain, and that God would answer our request. 2. A certainty and profession of our confidence, or a confirmation of our faith, by which we are fully persuaded that we shall be heard. The word *Amen* signifies, therefore, 1. So let it be, or let that come to pass which we ask. 2. May God, who is not unmindful of his promise certainly and truly hear us.

FINIS.

SOLI DEO SIT GLORIA.